



MY YOUNG SCHOOLMATE.

BY LILLA HERBERT.

ALICE M—— was a bright and joyous-hearted being, the child of wealth and luxury, the petted and caressed of all who knew her. She was very, very beautiful. Hers was that delicate, spiritual, yet radiant style of loveliness so rare on earth, and which never fails to win admiration and attention. Yet even had no beauty been hers Alice would have been just as tenderly loved, for she possessed in a singular degree the charm of manner, and by her winning ways all unconsciously took captive every heart that came within the sphere of her influence. Rich treasures of intellect were also hers, and youthful though she was, her mind was both well stored and cultivated. From her earliest childhood she had been remarkable for the nobleness of her character, her deep, earnest love of truth, and her scorn of aught that was mean or unjust. Alice was the light of our school-room. In the hour of study her example shed a halo over all around her—and during the time devoted to recreation she was the life of the merry group, and the sound of her clear ringing laughter fell like a burst of sweet music upon the ear.

But alas! "death's hand is ever upon earth's fairest creations." Too soon the touch of the destroyer visited our sweet Alice M——, and there came a time when her usual seat was vacant, and we looked in vain for the glance of those soft, meek eyes. She was ill, we were told, but she would perhaps get better soon—and so we waited patiently for days—and days lengthened into weeks, and still Alice returned not to her accustomed place. At last we received the intelligence that she had grown much worse, that she had a fearful cough, and was destined soon to fall a victim to consumption. Oh, the grief, the anguish of that hour! How many eyes that seldom wept were now dim with tears—how many young hearts that till then had been strangers to sorrow were now bowed to the earth with its weight!

At first we could scarcely believe it possible that one who had so lately moved among us, was to be a member of our little band no more. But when we could at length fully comprehend the truth, it came upon us with almost overwhelming force. And perhaps of all, I felt most deeply—for Alice M—— had long been my most intimate and favorite companion, and the thought that I was about to lose her forever wrung the innermost chords of my heart. And in my wild agony of woe I thought not of the fair home to which Alice was hastening—that

home for which her pure and holy nature so well fitted her, in that glorious land "where the storm and the shadow cometh not." I only remembered that I would never again listen to the music of that voice, never more meet the gaze of those speaking eyes, and hearken vainly for the sound of that light, soft footfall.

Again there came intelligence from the invalid, and it was said that she had not many days to live—and at last we received a note, written in her own well known hand-writing, but so faint, so trembling, so illegible, that we could barely discern the words. She was very weak, she wrote, so weak that she could scarcely hold the pen in her hand, but she wished to write a few lines to us, that we might know she still remembered and loved us all. She then told us that her dissolution was fast approaching, and begged us if we cared to see her once more ere she died, to come to her that afternoon.

That little note was read by each one, and covered with tears and kisses—and at the appointed hour we set forth on our visit to Alice.

As we entered the apartment we beheld Alice M—— reclining upon a couch, her fair head propped up with pillows. She was very thin, and the blue swelling veins could be plainly traced upon that snowy brow—but her cheek was crimsoned with a deep flush which contrasted fearfully with the marble skin, while her eyes were strangely brilliant.

As her gaze fell upon the familiar forms of her schoolmates, her head sank heavily back upon its resting-place, and for a few seconds Alice covered her face with her hands, while her slight frame shook with emotion. But at length with an effort she calmed herself and motioned her companions to draw nearer. One by one they approached the bedside and took that emaciated hand tenderly within their own. Alice drew each form close to her heart—pressed her lips to their forehead many times—whispered a few faltering words of farewell, and then gave one long, last lingering glance into each loved face, as though she would imprint their features more strongly upon her memory. And as they turned away, that little chamber was filled with the sound of mourning: half smothered sobs and broken exclamations, that would burst forth despite all efforts to restrain them.

One by one they then passed from the apartment, and when I had beheld them all depart, with an earnest desire to see Alice alone, I again glided softly into the room. Her face was buried in the pillows, and I knew that she

was weeping; but as I pronounced her name she turned toward me.

"Alice," I said, with a sudden burst of grief; "Alice is there no hope—none? Oh, say that you will not die—say that you will still be with me, for I cannot, cannot lose you!"

"Oh! Lilla," she replied, and her voice was full of emotion, "do not speak thus to me—do not make me *wish* to live. Till to-day I deemed that I was resigned to my fate—but now that I have seen you all, I feel that it is very hard to part from those I love, forever!"

And as she spoke again her head was bowed, and her frame convulsed with anguish.

For some moments there was silence in the apartment—during which Alice grew calmed, and she clasped her hands tightly together while her lips moved as though in prayer. When she again looked up there was not a single trace of agitation visible on her countenance.

"Do not mourn for me," she said, pressing my hand affectionately within her own—"do not mourn, dearest Lilla. It was very wrong to repine as I did just now—but that is over, and I feel that I shall be happier, oh! far happier, in the land whither I am going."

"But oh! Alice," I exclaimed in broken accents, "I shall miss you from my side so sadly. There will be one less to love me—and that one the dearest and best of all!"

"One less to love you here on earth,
One more to watch in Heaven,"

murmured Alice, while a radiant smile overspread her face. "Yes, Lilla," she continued, "if it be allowed me *there*—and I hope and think it will—I will still watch over you, and over all who have loved me here. And you—you will often think of *me*, will you not?"

I could not reply, for my heart was too full for utterance—but as I gazed upon that pale, sweet face I could not help thinking how many struggles it must have cost Alice ere she gave up all hope of life, and learned to submit without a murmur to the will of her Maker.

After this interview I never again saw Alice alive. The next day her spirit took its upward flight, and when I for the last time went to look upon her, the coffin was her couch.

"Praise for the dead who leave us when they part,
Such hope as she hath left,—the pure in heart!"

AGNES COURTENAY.

A TALE OF THE OLD DOMINION.

"Oh! listen, listen, ladies fair,
And gallant knight so debonaire:
Come listen, listen all!" OLD BALLAD.

CHAPTER I.—BLINDMAN'S BLUFF.

"LENNOX as I live!" exclaimed a voice in tones of the warmest hospitality, as the owner appeared at the door of his mansion. "I am overjoyed to see you. Welcome to Virginia!"

As young Courtenay spoke, he grasped the hand of his friend, and ordering the groom to take the horses, dragged Lennox by main force into the drawing room.

"This reminds me of old times," he continued. "You haven't forgotten the gay hours we spent together when we were at Oxford? And you have made the tour of Europe since! Come, sit down and let us hear all about it."

The two friends, like most of the sons of the wealthy southerners at the day of which we write, had been educated in England; and had parted three years before in London, the one to return to his patrimonial halls in Virginia, the other to make the tour of the continent. Lennox had just come back from his travels, and, after a few days spent in his native colony of South Carolina, had hastened to redeem a long standing promise to visit Courtenay Hall.

The period of which we write was that of the revolution; but in 1778, at which date our story begins, the war had not yet invaded the Old Dominion. That rich and aristocratic colony consequently was less affected by the troubles of the period than any of its neighbors. Her stately mansions still resounded with mirth and song; her beautiful daughters were yet as gay as ever; and a casual visitor would have remained ignorant of the great deeds transacting around him, from whose throes a nation was to be born.

It was a splendid and gorgeous era—never alas! to return again. Countless wealth united to magnificent tastes had made the ladies and

gentlemen of the olden time in Virginia a race, whose like we shall never look upon again. Their hospitality was as proverbial as their refinement of manners and their chivalrous courtesy. A true Virginian could scarcely be said to live at home. Associated in large and jovial parties, they passed from country-seat to country-seat, each host meeting them in turn with new amusements. We have an aged relative who delight to tell that, even in a later and degenerate day, she has left her home for a few hours visit, but been forced to protract her absence for weeks, being dragged from mansion to mansion by the hospitality of the Old Dominion.

"But I should long since have presented you to our guests," said young Courtenay rising, after a few minutes spent in conversing of old times, "we have a gay party here, most of them Virginians, the gentlemen frank and brave, the ladies beautiful as morning. We have also the Abbe Destouet, with whom I made acquaintance in Paris: though he gets the revenue, he is not yet a clergyman however. He is the life of all. The whole party is somewhere in the garden; whither they went an hour ago, leaving me to write letters, for which Agnes—you have heard me speak of my sister?—called me a hermit."

With these words he took his friend's arm and led him down a broad gravelled walk, through a garden luxuriant with trees and flowers. As they proceeded, sounds of merriment fell on the ear, and when at about a hundred yards distance from the house a turn in the path brought into view a most animated scene.

The party appeared to be engaged on a green lawn in playing Blindman's Bluff. Foremost in the group was a gentleman, whose plain black dress showed him to be the Abbé: his eyes were blindfolded, and with outstretched arms he was feeling his way along, while the players made room for him right and left. A beautiful girl, simply dressed in white, with blue ribbons quilled around her gown, had retreated against a tree, and with arms held back just managed to escape the Abbé. Another, less fortunate, had

stumbled and fallen on the grass, and a gentleman behind her, richly dressed, was provokingly kissing her hand. This, however, was not all her mishaps, for the Abbé had just trod on her lap-dog, which was howling piteously. A second gentleman, in laced coat and hat, stood at the left of the Abbé, and with both hands to his mouth was hallooing in the Frenchman's ear. A third, sheltered behind a tree, was laughing heartily at the spectacle. But the most prominent of all in the group, next to the Abbé, was a young girl of great beauty, who, attired with a coquettish little hat, stood just behind the Abbé and to his right, tickling his cheek with a straw. About the dress and air of this lovely vision there was a piquancy perfectly bewitching.

There was a hearty laugh on all sides, when the players found themselves discovered by a stranger. Soon after the party broke up into pairs. Lennox attached himself to the coquettish beauty, whom he had been introduced to as Courtenay's sister. She instantly led the way to a lively conversation.

"You see us," she said, "engaged in what some would call child's play; but the Abbé says man is only a larger sort of child, and that Blindman's Buff is as sensible as dancing. Philosophy, *a la Rousseau*, you know is now all the fashion. Besides, in Virginia, we love to be merry. Perhaps you will think us hoydens?"

"That can never be," said Lennox. "But what character must I give the gentlemen?"

"Oh! the gentlemen leap five barred gates—hunt seven hours a day—and welcome the morning with a cup of sack. They are just what you see they all are there, with the exception of Fred—large boned, passably handsome, and richly dressed—a sort of civilized giants in very good conceit of themselves."

Lennox laughed at this satirical sketch.

"But I thought," he said, "that the Virginia gentlemen were celebrated for courtliness."

"And so they are, if compliments can make them so. If we ladies believed half the pretty things said of us, we should look on ourselves as angels. But it is only because they are so vain themselves that the gentlemen flatter us—they do it out of pity to us, poor souls!"

"Some of them seem very busy at it now," said Lennox, glancing with a smile around him.

"Oh! yes, most of the party are madly in love. You don't know how glad I am that you have come! Pray, are you in love? People in love are very dull."

Her eyes sparkled with mischief, in spite of the demure look she put on. The question was so sudden that Lennox, albeit without cause, blushed and was embarrassed.

"Ah! I see," she said, "a crazy too!"

"I own to not being quite heart-whole," said Lennox, with spirit, recovering himself, "though I was an hour ago."

A slight color mounted to her cheeks at this speech; but she dropped a mock courtesy and answered gaily,

"Thank you! I will not reject the compliment, for it is positively the first I have had to-day. But though you flatter pretty well, Mr. Lennox, your education in that respect is susceptible of improvement."

"Will you be my teacher?"

"That depends on your behavior. What miracle will you perform to deserve my instructions?"

"I will be a perfect Amadis de Gaul. I will slay a dozen giants if you point them out. I will go through an enchanted forest, or watch a year and a day in a haunted castle——"

"Stop, stop, you will perform enough if you do only the tenth of what you promise. I have no doubt you are the mirror of knighthood—Courtenay has told me so already—but as I have no impossibilities just now to task you with, I will take pity on your disconsolate looks and give you a lesson at once."

Lennox bowed and would have spoken, but she raised her finger with a pretty menace and continued,

"Now I will be very frank—not that it is a rarity with me—I am always so. We women all like flattery. Nay! you need not smile. For we do not care to know we are being flattered: the art consists in flattering without betraying your purpose: hence you must adapt your compliments to the character of your listener. You must have tact—tact is everything. A little school girl of sixteen you may call beautiful to her face; a belle who has had a winter's conquests, must receive more delicacy; but a sensible woman you must compliment only by a glance of the eye, or the silent eloquence of your attentions."

"And how must I act here?" asked Lennox, looking around. "Are your friends in the first, second, or third class?"

"Oh!" replied Agnes gaily, "as for that, I have already told you they were in love. Fred said, this morning, we were just five pairs, counting him and me."

"And who is Fred?" said Lennox, for this was the second time he had heard this name.

"That handsome man, with the air distingué," she said frankly, "leaning against the tree, and talking so cavalierly to the pretty girl in blue trimmings. Fred is an Englishman, and a cousin—and a sort of beau of mine too——"

"Then I am in a fair way to be alone," said Lennox laughing. "I find everybody has a partner but myself."

"No, for I will be your partner—that is, for half the time, nay! I will promise for more. Do you accept me?"

"A wild, but fascinating creature," thought Lennox, and he bowed profoundly, accepting her offer in silence.

"I see you improve; that compliment shows that you rank me in class third. Well, I believe I am a sensible woman, as women go. And to prove it let us understand each other. You are to carry on a flirtation with me when I have nothing else to do, in order that we may keep each other in countenance among these love-sick couples. You are to fetch my fan, to caress my lap-dog, to ask me to dance: you are to be my slave, coming and going at my nod. And in return—"

"Oh! in return," said Lennox, interrupting her, "you are to teach me to make love."

Was it offended dignity that sent that haughty glance to the eyes of Agnes? But she recollected how gay and bantering had been the conversation: so she only curled her pretty lip saucily and said,

"Then you wish to practise with me? But take care!—take care!" and again she shook her finger coquettishly. "I shall remain heart whole, for it is to be a flirtation, and *only* a flirtation."

"Oh! certainly," said Lennox, coloring in turn, a little piqued at her emphasis.

"That understood then, I consent. You may practise the declaration of the eyes, and the eloquence of whispers, nay! I will even allow you to place your hand on your heart occasionally. You may also sigh now and then, quote poetry, and talk of the moonlight. Nor do I think I should be angry with you if, some night, you serenade me under my window. But, remember, that is all. This is to be *only* a flirtation."

She said this with an air of dignity which tempered the gaiety, nay! freedom of her words.

"Strange creature!" said Lennox to himself. "So lively, yet with so keen a sense of self-respect."

Agnes extended her hand as she spoke.

"There now, those are my terms," she added. "Is it a compact?"

"It is," said he, taking the fair hand for a moment, (he did not raise it to his lips) then adding gaily, "and now, how shall I begin?"

"You must walk beside me and clear the branches from before my path, for I am going to show you what a pretty lake we have at the

bottom of the garden. There—that is right—always stand aside and bow, holding the branch back, while I pass. You are an excellent scholar, and I will reward you with a rose when we meet a bush."

In this lively manner an hour passed, after which they returned to the house to dress for dinner, Lennox wearing the rose Agnes had given him displayed in his button hole.

It was somewhat strange, but when he reached his chamber, his first care was to take the rose and place it in water; while occupied in dressing he turned continually to gaze on the flower, for it seemed to shed around it an atmosphere as if Agnes herself had been present.

"I wonder who this cousin Fred can be?" said Lennox, rising from a long revery as the dinner bell sounded.

He did not know it yet, but he was already in love, and jealous of this cousin.

CHAPTER II.—THE QUARREL.

THE days at Courtenay Hall were passed in a continual round of festivities. The senior Mr. Courtenay was a true gentleman of the old school, and by his urbane and hospitable manner made every one feel at home. His son, lively and entertaining, constituted a great addition to the charms of the place. The company was congenial and intelligent. Those who recollect society in the Old Dominion now, may have an idea, though a faint one, of what it was seventy years ago.

To Lennox it was a fortnight of hitherto untasted bliss. The playful compact, begun between him and Agnes, in a few days terminated in a serious passion, at least on his part: for insensibly Agnes bestowed on him, not the half, but the whole of her leisure. In the morning she and Lennox rode together, and in the evening she was always his first partner for the dance. Often, too, when her other guests were engaged, she allowed Lennox, in the mornings, to come to her little boudoir and read to her.

Lennox was struck with one peculiarity in her demeanor. Lively as she generally was, Agnes had her fits of melancholy; and these were so terrible that Lennox thought they must have a deeper cause than those ordinary to a beautiful and flattered heiress. Could it be a secret attachment? His own peace forbade him to believe thus. He would have given much to be allowed to ask Agnes frankly; but their acquaintance, though intimate, did not yet warrant this liberty.

At first Mr. Beaufort—the cousin Fred of Agnes—had left Miss Courtenay almost wholly to our hero. But latterly he had made it a point

to interrupt them whenever they were *tete-a-tete*. Lennox bore this awhile with composure, but when he saw it persevered in he began to grow angry, and evinced this by his looks. Beaufort, however, returned glance for glance, and never yielded his place. What irritated Lennox most, however, was the demeanor of Agnes, who uniformly treated Beaufort with kindness. Now our hero was already sufficiently in love to resent the reception of a rival even on equal terms. He was, therefore, thrown into a jealous rage, when, one evening, on Beaufort's joining them, Agnes gradually bestowed the principal share of her attention on her cousin, until finally Lennox arose and left them. He had flattered himself that, at so decided a token of his anger, Agnes would evince regret; how then was he mortified when, watching her from a distant corner of the room, he beheld her more animated than before.

Every morning heretofore, Agnes had ridden out with Lennox, but on the day succeeding this, she and Beaufort departed together. At this Lennox was furiously indignant, notwithstanding Agnes made a half apology as she passed him with her cousin. For this, he said, was only an aggravation of her coquetry. He thought now he understood her melancholy. She was in love with Beaufort, and they had perhaps quarrelled just before his arrival. He remembered now that Beaufort had shared his attentions among all the ladies alike, as if no one in particular engaged his thoughts, avoiding, however, Agnes altogether. The conclusion Lennox arrived at was that Agnes had employed him as a tool to tease her lover, and that now, when Beaufort had been brought to submission, he was to be coolly cast off. What angered Lennox more was that he could not but own Agnes had given him fair warning, telling him from the first that she intended only to flirt with him.

He was further convinced that he had been made a dupe of, by what his servant told him carelessly while arranging his toilette for dinner. The valet by this time had got into the secrets of the family, and he informed his master that the marriage of Beaufort and Agnes was a common topic in the kitchen. The cousins, it appeared, had been engaged from childhood; and Beaufort had visited the colonies solely to wed Agnes. That the marriage had not already taken place was attributed to the growing turbulence of the times, and the ill health of Mrs. Courtenay, who had been an invalid in her room for nearly two years.

Fully convinced of the perfidy of his mistress, Lennox went down to dinner, resolved to show Agnes that her dupe was at last awakened. His

seat had always been at her side. On this day Beaufort occupied a chair on her right, having left his former place. This little incident confirmed Lennox in the opinion that there had been a lover's quarrel, of which he was the victim.

His first words to Agnes showed his ill humor. She stared with surprise, but soon made another effort to draw him into conversation, which met with an equally decided rebuff. This time she colored and turning addressed Beaufort. Directly, however, she said,

"Are you not well, Mr. Lennox?"

No one, but an angry lover, could have resisted the kind tone in which this was spoken, but Lennox answered,

"Perfectly well, but no longer a dupe."

Agnes looked at him in astonishment.

"No longer a dupe, madam!" repeated Lennox.

For an instant Agnes seemed thunderstruck; then, the blood mounted to her brow, and giving him a haughty look, she turned to Beaufort.

Beaufort had been taking wine with the Abbé, and had missed this interlude, but he caught enough of it to understand that Lennox was ill, as he supposed. He leaned over Agnes and spoke.

"Are you ill, my dear sir? A ride this morning would have done you good perhaps."

To be thus taunted with the event of the morning, and by the fortunate rival too, made the blood of our hero boil with fury. He scarcely knew what he said, but his reply attracted the attention of the Abbé, who, noticing his irritation, with a Frenchman's tact thought to turn it off.

"Ah! is Monsieur sick? Mademoiselle, how can that be, when he sits next to you? One ought to be well and happy there *toujours*."

"I believe Mr. Lennox," said Agnes, "is the only one who can enlighten us on the subject of his health. However, you are wrong, Abbé," she continued pointedly, "in saying a lady's presence can always make a sick man well, or a rude one well-behaved. Flatter your sex, or feed them, if you would keep them in good humor: for, if you pique their vanity, they become as surly and snarling as a hyena."

At this sally there was a general laugh; but, as soon as it had subsided, the Abbé, with admirable tact, turned the conversation: and Lennox, though smarting under the retort of Agnes, had the sense to consider that his anger was out of place at the table. But he resolved to show it very plainly on a more fitting opportunity. This presented itself sooner than he had expected; for, that evening, as he stood alone on

the piazza, a light footstep approached. He turned and saw Agnes.

"I have come for an explanation of your conduct at dinner, sir," she said. "What did you mean by it?"

Lennox started at so unexpected and singular an address. He looked at the flashing eye and compressed lip of Agnes, and wished the floor would open and swallow him from her sight.

"You were either insane," she resumed, "or else you intended to insult me. Which was it?"

This bluntness only increased his embarrassment.

"You are a strange creature!" at last he stammered, scarcely knowing what to say.

"No evasion, sir!" said Agnes, her eyes flashing. "I might have repeated to my brother or cousin the words you used, and they, being men, would have sought an explanation with the sword. But no blood shall be shed with my permission. In some respects, I differ from my sex: I am a frank, Virginia girl, who knows little and cares less for the ways of the great world; and I cannot suffer misconception to exist where there has been friendship. Has any one slandered me? Again I ask, what did you mean?"

Lennox was awed into admiration by this bold and spirited address. He argued that Agnes could not be guilty of wilful coquetry toward him, or she would not have dared thus to address him. Besides she was really angry. These things convinced him that he had been hasty and foolish, but this only increased the difficulty of answering. He stood there, abashed, looking down embarrassed, while Agnes gazed on him with a half scornful, half angry look, tapping the floor impatiently with her tiny foot. At last Lennox looked up and spoke,

"I will frankly own, Miss Courtenay, that I have been rude and insolent. I was a brute at the table: and for being so, am now angry at myself."

Agnes burst into tears. The proud, high-spirited girl had wrought herself up to the independent part she had acted, but at this frank apology, delivered in a tone of deep feeling and humility, her woman's nature gave way.

"My dear Miss Courtenay," said Lennox, respectfully approaching her, "I shall never forgive myself for this."

She struggled to master her emotion, and in part succeeded.

"I freely forgive you," she said, "but even yet I cannot explain your harsh words. They were meant for me, but what have I done?"

Lennox felt that a full explanation was impossible, so he replied evasively,

"I was angry that you did not ride with me

this morning. I thought it a standing engagement."

"But you know I told you at first that I could not give you all my time. Beaufort is entitled to a share of it. Are we friends again?"

This allusion to her cousin did not please him, but he had already made himself ridiculous by his jealousy that day; so he strove to think nothing of it, and extended his hand.

"We are friends, that is if you will let me be your friend again," he said.

"I will put you on good behavior first," replied Agnes, with her old gaiety, "for a whole week you must not expect to ride with me but once every other day: the rest must be devoted to Fred. But all the rest of the time you may have my society, if indeed it is worth the having." As she said this her voice trembled a little.

Lennox could have clasped her hand and told her how he prized that society, if he had dared, or if he had felt sure that she did not love Beaufort.

The company within now advanced to the piazza, and on finding Agnes and Lennox *tete-a-tete* made the pair the subject of some merry jests: and our hero noticed that Beaufort fixed his eyes severely on Agnes, and that she colored in embarrassment. However she soon recovered herself, and was, during the remainder of the evening, the liveliest of the party.

From that day the old relations between Lennox and Agnes grew more intimate than ever. They read their favorite poets together in her boudoir, whenever she was not engaged with her other guests; and there was, at such interviews, a magnetism of soul which assured him that Agnes entered fully into his thoughts and his enthusiasm.

But jealousy of Beaufort still occasionally visited him. Often she and her cousin would be closeted in her boudoir for hours: for whenever Beaufort asked this favor it seemed to be granted of course.

There was a mystery about their connexion which gave Lennox many a sleepless night. Frequently, when alone, he convinced himself that Agnes was trifling with him; but one of her sweet smiles instantly dissipated his chagrin and made him more her slave than ever.

CHAPTER III.—THE WAR.

MEANWHILE the intelligence reached Courtenay Hall that the royal army was about to try the fortune of war in Georgia and South Carolina. Hitherto little had been said, among the gay party of visitors, concerning the troubles of the period: but this was a movement, which, as it threatened eventually to bring the

war to their own doors, was calculated to interest the most indifferent; and the conversation now frequently turned on the probable length of the contest and the character of its termination. On this latter point the guests appeared to be unanimous, and Lennox, who leaned to the popular side, found himself in a minority.

His sentiments, however, he had yet found no good opportunity of declaring; but he determined to make them public before his departure; for eager to be among the first to participate in the struggle, he resolved to lose no time in returning to South Carolina. Before he went, however, he was anxious to learn the feelings of Agnes, otherwise, happy in the present, he might have postponed a *denouement* indefinitely.

For the nearer he contemplated this crisis, the more he trembled for the result. It was no longer alone jealousy of Beaufort that now troubled him. A poor cadet, without fortune, how could he hope to win one like Agnes, who was an heiress in her own right! As if half suspecting his purpose too, Agnes, since the night of their quarrel, had avoided conversing on love, and whenever the subject was introduced, treated it as a jest.

"You do not surely believe in love, Abbé!" she said, when Lennox, she and their French guest were chatting together. "It may do well enough to write about in romances; but the march of civilization, of which you talk so much, has quite abolished so antiquated an article. Love, forsooth!—it is a lure you men use to entrap poor maidens. I'll have none of it!"

"Ah!" said the Abbé, "your time, mademoiselle, will come vore soon. Your sex is in love always: one cannot exist without the other."

"Oh! you vile slanderer," replied the lively Agnes. "Cannot you come to my aid, Mr. Lennox, and rescue me from this most ungallant of Frenchmen? A woman cannot live without love!—pshaw, she likes her lap-dog better than her husband, and thinks more of a single dimple than of all the lovers in the world. No, Abbé, we tolerate your sex, because you tease us into it; and resign ourselves to matrimony at last, just as we do to any other unavoidable evil."

"Then you admit matrimony cannot be escaped?" said Lennox laughingly.

"To be sure it can, only women are too full of pity, and take compassion on the poor fools they see dying for them."

"As my fair antagonist will do, some day yet!" said the Abbé.

"Do you credit the prophecy?" said Lennox, and he looked full in her face.

"No indeed," replied Agnes, laughing lightly

as she tossed her head, "my heart is harder than the nether millstone, and could never be moved to pity even by the sighs of all mankind. I love my freedom too well to wear a chain, even though it be the flower-decked one of a bride. No gilded cage for me, but liberty to soar as I list."

"Ah! you will think differently if you ever love," said Lennox, with a shade of reproach in his voice.

Perhaps Agnes noticed this, perhaps not, but she answered gaily.

"Call me a heretic in love, if I ever put my neck in the yoke. Now if the old romances were really to come true," continued the lively girl, "and some prince were to arrive to woo me, who was another Alladin in riches, then perhaps, mind I say perhaps, I might consent to spend his income and make him miserable. But to marry in a fit of sentiment and live on love in a cottage—you may send me to a lunatic asylum if I ever show signs of such insanity! No, while a woman is single, she lives in a paradise of flattery, but let her once marry and she sinks to an insignificant drudge. So gentlemen, I warn you, take care of your hearts!"

For two days this conversation plunged Lennox in despair, and delayed his departure, for through her vein of giddiness, he thought he detected a warning meant for himself. The only reflection that afforded him hope was that if Agnes entertained such sentiments on love, her heart was not Beaufort's.

On the third morning, however, unable longer to endure his suspense, he sought Agnes in her boudoir.

"I am going away to-morrow," he said abruptly.

As he had purposely concealed his intention, this announcement took Agnes by surprise. She became suddenly pale.

"Going away!—and to-morrow!" she mechanically repeated.

Her eye fell before his: she blushed and looked down in embarrassment. A sudden hope thrilled through his soul. Could it be possible she loved him? He took her hand and said eagerly,

"My dear Miss Courtenay, it is almost in despair that I go. May I ask before I bid you farewell forever—"

"Ask me nothing!" exclaimed Agnes, agitatedly snatching away her hand and covering her face with it. "Oh! I implore you, Mr. Lennox, ask me nothing." She trembled violently.

Had she shown less agitation these words would indeed have filled our hero with despair, but they produced a contrary effect. In a hurried, but respectful voice, he resumed.

"Nay! Agnes, for let me this once call you thus, it is due to myself that I should be explicit. I love you earnestly, sincerely, devotedly love you. When I came hither, though I had mingled with many of your sex, I had never seen one who awakened more than a passing interest in my heart. Nor, for awhile, did I discover that in you I had met my fate. Our acquaintance began with a jesting compact that led at once to an intimacy, and seeing you unreservedly each day, how could I do else than learn to love you! But I exonerate you from the charge of encouraging me," said he sadly, as he saw that Agnes, though still concealing her face, and dreadfully agitated, shook her head—"indeed you have rather repelled my suit, and until this moment, I had resolved to leave you without seeking an explanation."

"Oh! would that you had," cried Agnes, lifting up her face.

"This is strange," said Lennox to himself. "She does not act like one who loves another, yet she is averse to my suit. What mystery is here?"

He took her hand again and said.

"Why do you wish I had concealed my love? To spare me the pain of a refusal! Then you scorn my suit?"

She remained silent for a moment, and Lennox was turning away, when she said,

"Oh! let us forget this interview. Let us again be friends. You are angry, Mr. Lennox?"

"No, Agnes, I am not angry," he said, reproachfully, "but you do not answer me. Yet you are above coquetry, I know."

Agnes flushed at these words, and then became pale; it was evident she was struggling to command herself. In a moment she succeeded and said in a calm voice,

"Listen to me, Lennox. You have seen before that I am a strange, wilful girl, too frank perhaps: and perhaps some might blame me for what I am about to say. Reason this matter then and see what you wish me to do. You offer me your love, you, a patriot, and I, a royalist's daughter—can you suppose, for one moment, that my father would listen to your suit? And, on the other hand, can you think so meanly of me as to believe that I would marry without my parent's consent?"

"But how know you I am a patriot? I have never mentioned politics in your presence."

Agnes smiled faintly as she replied.

"Do you think we could converse as familiarly as we have done on all subjects for nearly a month, and I remain ignorant of your political sentiments. I believe you when you say that you have avoided speaking on the present troubles.

There is not a soul in the Hall besides myself, I am convinced, that suspects your true sentiments. But surely you do not mean to deny them?"

"No," said Lennox sadly, but firmly, "though they lose me my mistress, I will be no traitor to them. But I did not think this of you, Agnes!"

Agnes looked up with a flashing eye, but it was over in a moment. She would not part in anger, however unjust his reproach.

"That is unfair, Mr. Lennox," she said. "I am sure you did not mean it!"

"Pardon me, I did not," he said: then giving way to his emotion he continued, "oh! Agnes, why will you be so cold and calculating? If it was not for this war you would love me—is it not so?"

Agnes became deadly pale, but she mustered strength to reply firmly.

"It is useless to put cases that cannot happen. I shall always regard you as a friend, but you must not hope for more."

"Then you love another—you love Beaufort—when I am gone you will marry him," exclaimed Lennox, in tones of anguish.

"I shall never marry!"

"Then you are not wholly indifferent to me. Oh! though doomed to part, hold out some hope—at least tell me that you will sometimes think of me."

"You are ungenerous," said Agnes, in an agitated voice. "Again I repeat, it is useless to speak of impossibilities: fate has put a union between us out of the question."

"Cold, unfeeling creature!" exclaimed Lennox, turning away. But immediately he confronted her again, "Agnes, I know not what I say. You drive me to madness. But I see there is some strange mystery here. Is it true that you have been engaged to Beaufort from childhood? Do they mean to force you to marry him against your will?"

"Mr. Lennox," said Agnes, rising with dignity, "these are questions you should not ask, nor I answer. If you knew my father better you would know he would compel me to marry no man I did not love. I have told you that I should never marry. The reasons for that resolution, which is unalterable, are sacred. I respect you—I would have had you for a friend—but you will not consent."

Her words calmed Lennox at once. In her hands his impetuous nature become as wax to be moulded at her will. He looked down abashed.

"Forgive me again," he said, "and I will obey your wishes. I will be your slave. Yes! I will accept the place of your friend—I will be

a second brother to you, guarding you from danger and ever praying for your happiness, even though," and here his voice became sad, "even though on the ruins of my own."

"And I accept the offer, and will be a sister to you. Nor think not," she said, in an accent of inexpressible melancholy, "that I need no sympathy: it is not always that a smiling face covers a happy heart."

"And are you then miserable? I have often suspected it. Oh! if you would tell the cause," said Lennox eagerly.

"That cannot be," said Agnes quickly, and in some embarrassment, for steps were heard approaching. "There, farewell!—we are about to be interrupted—it is Beaufort's step I hear."

She opened the door in agitation and almost pushed Lennox out.

He went to his room, scarcely knowing what to think. He was more deeply in love than ever, but just as uncertain as before of the sentiments of Agnes. What mystery was this connecting her with Beaufort, for in that lay the cause of her secret sorrow? Yet she did not love her cousin, that at least the interview had revealed. Still she was thrown into agitation at the idea of being found by him *tete-a-tete* with Lennox. The more our hero thought of the subject, the deeper grew his perplexity.

But gradually order arose out of the chaos of his thoughts. Taking the words and actions of Agnes together, Lennox indulged the hope that he was beloved, but that some powerful cause compelled his mistress to reject his suit at present. If it was a difference in political opinions he trusted time would remove the obstacle. Yet he would have given much if he had parted from Agnes with some positive assurance of love on her side.

When he went to the table he noticed that the eyes of Agnes looked red, as if she had been weeping. He was sad himself, in spite of the hopes with which he had been flattering himself, and his voice betrayed this. Nor was Agnes more gay. She seemed to be striving to assume a part when she spoke in her former lively tones; and Lennox thought he detected in her voice, when she addressed him, a scarcely perceptible tremor, which, however, made his heart beat quick.

"I am very sorry to hear of your early departure," said Mr. Courtenay, addressing our hero toward the close of the repast. "Is it imperative that you should leave us?"

Lennox assured him that it was, on which the company generally joined in expressions of regret. One of them added,

"But I fear all of us must speedily imitate

the example of Mr. Lennox. The times grow stormier, and the war threatens to invade our calm colony. We cannot much longer remain idle, but must take part, like men of honor, in the strife."

"There spoke a true man," said the host. "And, gentlemen, before we separate, I have a toast to propose. Fill your glasses. The ladies, too, will join us in this, I hope. 'The King! God bless him, and may he speedily put down this foul rebellion!' A bumper, sirs."

Agnes looked hurriedly and nervously at Lennox as these words were pronounced, and her glass trembled in her hand so as to spill some of its wine. She saw Lennox color, but he did not fill his glass.

"You do not drink!" said Beaufort, in real or else admirably affected surprise, calling, by the direction of his eyes, the attention of the company on Lennox.

"I am very sorry, sir," said our hero, turning respectfully to his host, "to refuse any toast given at your table; but I cannot drink this one, for my sympathies are all with the other side."

Mr. Courtenay put down his glass in amazement. One or two of the younger guests half started up, and darted angry glances at Lennox.

Mr. Courtenay, however, was the first to break the silence. It was manifest he had waited to control himself, before he replied to a refusal, which, in that day, was often regarded as an insult, and sometimes led to fatal duels.

"I am pained to hear such an opinion from you, Mr. Lennox," he said. "The name of Lennox has ever been a loyal one. A Lennox fought by the side of a Courtenay on the bloody field of Naseby. It was a Lennox that raised the royal standard almost unaided during the foul usurpation of Cromwell. If here in Virginia, where the descendants of the old cavaliers reside, there is a lack of loyalty, where shall we look for it? I would as soon desert my banner when the battle went thickest against it, as turn traitor to my king in this extremity."

The hot blood gushed to our hero's temples at this speech, but he remembered the speaker was the father of Agnes. His eye, however, like that of a lion at bay, glanced a moment fiercely around the table, as if in search of some one to take up Mr. Courtenay's words. He met angry glances enough, and might have provoked an outburst if it had not been for the touch of a gentle hand laid on his arm unseen by the rest of the company. It was that of Agnes. He glanced at her, and her appealing look called him back to himself.

He glanced around proudly, but courteously, and replied then,

"I am sorry I differ with you, Mr. Courtenay, and with so many honorable gentlemen. But I am honest in my opinions, and have expressed them frankly, even at the loss of friendships I have valued. But God wills it so!"

He rose from his seat as he spoke and bowed to his host and then to the guests. There was something so noble and dignified in his conduct that all rose, as if by one impulse, and remained standing until he had left the apartment.

"Farewell now to every hope of Agnes!" said Lennox bitterly, when he reached his room. "Her father would see her in her grave before he would allow her to wed me."

He called his servant and ordered him to prepare his baggage, saying he intended to leave the hall that evening. He wished in fact to get away before the gentlemen left the dinner table.

In half an hour everything was prepared, and he walked down to the great entrance. As he passed gloomily along the corridor he heard a light step, and turning beheld Agnes hastening after him. She had evidently been shedding tears, but now she strove to smile.

"You acted nobly," she said. "Act always thus and I shall esteem you indeed as a brother."

She spoke with much emotion. Lennox had a hundred things he had intended to say to her if they met before his departure, but they all faded at that moment, and indeed his choking voice forbade utterance. He took her hand in silence and raised it reverently to his lips.

"Farewell!" he said. "Oh! Agnes—" He could utter no more.

Agnes could not speak, but the tears that started to her eyes, were her answer.

He rushed from her presence, flung himself on his horse, and galloped from Courtenay Hall, with feelings akin to those we may imagine our first father experienced when thrust forth from Paradise. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

AGNES COURTENAY.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15.

CHAPTER IV.--THE RESCUE.

AN interval of several months had elapsed since the transactions of the last chapter, and in that period great events had taken place. The British army had invaded and overrun Georgia, and was now preparing for that movement against the Carolinas, which terminated in the fall of Charleston, and the temporary subjugation of the South.

It was early in the morning of a bright, summer-like day, when two individuals might have been seen travelling on foot from the British post of Ebenezer. Both were men in the prime of life, and of courageous aspect; but one, who walked a little in the advance would more particularly have attracted a stranger's attention, for his countenance had that bold, good-humored, prepossessing aspect so common to the pure Irish race, of which it needed but a look to see the person in question was a member.

For some time the companions walked in silence, when the second of the two addressed the individual we have described.

"How came it, Jasper?" he said, "that you left the British camp in such a hurry? I thought you had obtained only half the intelligence Major Lennox sent you after."

"True you are there," said the other, who was none other than the renowned Sergeant Jasper, whose bravery at Fort Moultrie and on other occasions has made his name, though but that of a petty officer, immortal, "true you are there, Newton; but you see my heart is full of these poor American prisoners that passed through the camp this morning on their way to Savannah. My brother says they will certainly be hanged."

Now the brother of Jasper was a sergeant in the British army, and it was the knowledge of this, coupled with a boundless confidence in Jasper's shrewdness, which had induced our hero to suggest that Jasper should visit his brother, and, while pretending to have come only from fraternal affection, employ the occasion to note the preparations and divine the plans of the British. To succeed in this scheme it was necessary, however, that Jasper should pretend to have left the American ranks, and for the better security of their stratagem he was accompanied by a fellow sergeant who pretended to have also grown tired of the patriots. The very morning, however, after Jasper's arrival at Ebenezer, he suddenly left, evading his brother's entreaties to enlist, and surprising Newton by his precipitancy.

"My heart is full of those poor prisoners," continued Sergeant Jasper, "and I dreamed of them all night. Did you notice the young wife of one of them? She has walked the whole way with the escort—leading her little boy by the side of her husband—vainly supposing that her tears may move the judges! But she might as well attempt to melt the hills of Galway."

Jasper spoke with emotion, and paused awhile, as if expecting his companion to make some reply. But Newton remained silent. Suddenly Jasper said,

"Can we not rescue them?"

Newton shook his head.

"That is impossible," he said—"they are guarded by eight men, a sergeant and a corporal; they are ten to our two."

"I fear you are right," said Jasper, with a sigh, "but the sad face of that woman haunts me. Poor, poor thing!"

"I don't know but what we might surprise them," said Newton, after a pause. "I wouldn't object to undertaking the affair if the odds were a little less numerous against it. Suppose we dog the escort and wait events."

"That is exactly what I was going to propose," said Jasper with animation. "We will keep on their track, and it will be hard indeed if something in the shape of luck does not yet turn up."

Accordingly the travellers, who had on starting from the camp, taken a different direction from that pursued by the escort, changed their course, striking across the country until they arrived at the road travelled by the prisoners, whom they cautiously followed at a safe distance behind. But mile after mile passed without the looked for chance arriving. The escort, ten in number, and all well armed, marched with the prisoners in their centre; and the two Americans, who, though keeping studiously out of sight, managed every few minutes to reconnoitre, saw that their undertaking was hopeless, the more so because they were themselves unarmed.

But this disappointment only increased the pity which Jasper experienced for the victims, and especially for the young wife. It was indeed a beautiful, but touching spectacle to see the uncomplaining patience with which she bore the fatigues of the rough journey, marching at her husband's side, with one hand holding her little boy, while, with the other, she pressed the father's. Now and then she turned her face aside to hide a tear; but she took care to conceal her emotion: and when her face met that of her husband, it beamed only with hope and cheerfulness. Oh! holy is the love of woman.

The escort was now approaching Savannah, where the country became more cultivated and open. As there was now great danger of being detected, Newton proposed to abandon the pursuit.

"No, not yet," said Jasper—"stand by me half an hour longer; and if we do not succeed before the expiration of that time, you may take me where you will. There is a spring just out of Savannah—on the very edge of the woods that skirt the town—and if the escort stops there to drink, as is probable after this long march, I have a plan in my head which, I think, will succeed. At least it is worth a trial. I know a bye-path which will conduct us first to the spring, where we can lie in ambush and wait our chance. The enterprise may cost us our lives, but I am willing to risk mine. Will you throw yours too into the scale?"

"Willingly," said Newton.

The two friends clasped their hands in silence; and in that mute embrace felt they were each others, for life or death!

Jasper and Newton did not have to wait long in their ambush. Presently, the escort arrived with the prisoners, and, as the Americans had supposed, halted under the shade of the trees. Wearied and heated with a long march, the soldiers, when their leader gave the glad command to ground arms, hastily stacked their muskets and hurried down to the limpid spring, whose waters, bubbling up clear and cool from the white sand, diffused a refreshing atmosphere around. The poor prisoners flung themselves by the road-side, the wife clinging close to her husband, who, with his face buried in his hands, sat in gloomy thought. Two of the soldiers remained with their muskets shouldered, guarding the captives. Two others, also armed, followed their companions to the spring in order to bring water for the prisoners; but before they stooped to dip up the gelid liquid, they carelessly rested their muskets against a tree but a few paces distant from the spot where Jasper and his friend were concealed.

The heroic sergeant had watched these proceedings with a beating heart, not daring to stir, scarcely venturing even to breathe, lest his presence should be betrayed. But when the two soldiers rested their muskets, he turned to Newton, with a quick look of intelligence. His partner comprehended it, and answered by a similar look. Jasper nodded. The next instant the two men sprang from the thicket, seized the two guns, and, quick as thought, levelled and fired at the sentries. The unfortunate soldiers fell dead without a word. It was the work of scarcely a second for our

adventurers to rush up to the fallen men, and seizing their muskets in turn, point them at the unarmed crowd assembled at the spring.

Had a lion suddenly sprung from his lair into the midst of the British soldiers, they could not have been more astonished or panic-struck. Most of them were stooping to drink of the spring, when the report of the two muskets caused them to leap to their feet, and looking hurriedly around they saw the intrepid Americans standing over the dead bodies of the sentries, and coolly levelling the muskets on their own dense mass. Their first thought was that they were all to be devoted to massacre; and by an instantaneous impulse, most of them fell on their knees.

"Quarter, quarter," they cried, "we surrender!"

"You are dead men if you don't," said Jasper.

While Jasper kept guard with levelled piece, his friend bound the British soldiers one by one, the arms of the American prisoners being first untied, and the muskets of the enemy placed in their hands, to be in readiness in case the soldiers attempted a rescue.

No one of the liberated captives was more profuse in his expressions of gratitude than the husband and father. But a moment before he had been brooding over the terrible death that awaited him, and in agony of heart bewailing that his wife and little one would soon be left in poverty to the cold mercies of the world. Now, with the suddenness of some wild dream, he found himself free. His wife's emotion was even more uncontrollable. In an instant she had been raised from despair to happiness: she saw her husband, the lover of her youth and the father of her child, again restored to her. In her eyes the heroic Jasper seemed like an angel sent down from heaven, and flinging herself at his feet, she grasped his hand and with tears bade God bless him.

"Nay, nay, rise," said Jasper, himself deeply affected. "I am but a mortal like yourself, and it is not right that you should kneel to any one but your Maker. I did but my duty."

The father too, with his child in his arms, had struggled to Jasper, and in like manner knelt. The sergeant raised both him and his wife.

No time, however, was to be lost in escaping from a vicinity so dangerous, for the reports of the muskets had been heard in Savannah, and would no doubt bring out inquirers. Accordingly, in a few minutes, Jasper and his friend, with the rescued prisoners were crossing the river, escorting the eight surviving British soldiers, now in turn captives. In due

time the party arrived safely at the American camp.

CHAPTER V.—THE SPY.

THE daring feat of Sergeant Jasper was still ringing in men's ears when the gallant fellow perished in the combined attack made by the French and American forces on Savannah, a fatal battle which cost the cause of liberty the lives of two men equally daring and chivalric, though of widely different ranks in life, Pulaski and our humble sergeant.

The good deeds of men live after them! As a proof of this our hero found that neither the rescued prisoner nor his wife forgot their debt of gratitude even after the gallant Jasper was in his grave. On the contrary they took every occasion of showing it to Lennox, as the commander of him to whom they owed their lives. At length, however, our hero lost sight of them, and they were fast passing from his mind in the absorbing incidents that now rapidly followed each other, beginning with the invasion of South Carolina and terminating with the fall of Charleston. After that melancholy event the patriot force, as is well known, was, for a time, entirely dissipated.

One day, sad and dispirited, our hero sat in his desolate mansion. Fortune had, in one sense, smiled on him since we last beheld him; for by the death of his elder brother he had succeeded to the patrimonial estate. Indeed, but for his presence at the bed-side of the dying, he would have been among the prisoners taken at Charleston. But this accession of wealth brought no joy to his heart. Bankrupt in love, bereaved of a brother he had loved dearly, and seeing scarcely any hope of his country's freedom, no wonder he sat there, in that deserted old mansion, plunged in the gloomiest despair.

Suddenly a servant entered and announced a visitor. Lennox raised his head, which had been sunk in brooding melancholy on his breast, and desired that the stranger might be shown in. A man in an ordinary dress entered; his attire soiled as if by travel; but in the gathering twilight Lennox did not recognize the face as that of any one he had ever seen.

"You do not know me, sir, I see!" said the man, bowing, but declining the offered seat. "I am the prisoner whom Sergeant Jasper—God bless him!—rescued near Savannah."

"Ah! Mr. Stewart, I remember you know," said Lennox. "But pray be seated."

"I have come, sir," said the man, entering at once on the subject of his journey, "to see if you are not going to raise a company to fight the British. Says I to my wife, 'the good cause is not lost yet, desperate as it seems: it only

wants some one to begin the battle over again; and, as I owe to my country my life ever since Sergeant Jasper saved me from the gallows, I will be one of the first to enlist.' And then my wife spoke up, and she said, said she, 'there's no gentleman will be so ready to risk his life and lands as Major Lennox!' And with that I came here to offer to follow you to death, if needs be."

"And your confidence shall not be misplaced, my good fellow," said Lennox, gratified by the man's homely, but eloquent expression of patriotism, "please God, we will shake out the old ensign again, and try once more to drive these invaders from our soil."

"Ay! I knew you would say so," replied the visitor. "And so I told my wife to go at once into Charleston; she has friends there; for mayhap we might never meet again, and she had better be in the enemy's town in safety than exposed to the alternate plunder of both parties in the open country."

"But is she not known as your wife? Will they not think her a spy?"

"Oh! no, your honor. She has high connexions, my wife has, and, as luck would have it, they are now in Charleston. Perhaps you have heard of them, sir—the rich Courtenays of Virginia. Mrs. Courtenay was own second cousin to my wife, and though she is now dead, her daughter Agnes knows Lucy well, for Lucy is Virginia born herself, and has nursed Miss Agnes many a time."

It was well that the twilight prevented his features from being distinguishable, else the speaker would have noticed the agitation of our hero's countenance at these words. Though more than a year had passed since Lennox left Courtenay Hall, and though in all that interval he had heard nothing from its inmates, as was indeed not singular considering the unsettled condition of the country, his love for Agnes still burned as brightly as ever. Time, perhaps, and the utter hopelessness of his suit had mellowed down his passion somewhat; but Agnes still filled his waking thoughts, still was the subject of his nightly dreams. In spite, too, of the apparently unconquerable obstacles to their union, imagination would occasionally lead him astray, and he would picture Agnes as his own at some future, but indefinite period. Her parting look assured him of her love, nor was there a day in which he did not recall it. Ah! what castles in the air lovers will build.

"Miss Agnes could protect anybody," continued the speaker, not noticing the start and look of Lennox at the mention of that endeared name. "She is the beauty of the town, they

say, ever since she arrived. Mr. Courtenay, as perhaps you have heard, sir, had to leave Virginia because he was such a bitter tory, and the colony authorities were going to imprison him and confiscate his estate. So he has gone to Charleston, and as soon as his daughter marries Mr. Beaufort, they are all to sail for England, where they intend to live, at least until this country is reduced to obedience."

"Agnes going to be married!" said Lennox, with a start of horror, incredulity and surprise.

"Then you know her, sir?" replied his visiter, in turn astonished.

But Lennox, suddenly cast down from his long cherished dream that Agnes loved him, had no thought of what the man might think of him, and in fact did not hear this question, so pre-occupied was he with his own reflections.

"Agnes going to be married!" he cried, rising and advancing toward his visiter. "It cannot be. Man, beware that you deceive me not!"

The first thought of Stewart was that our hero was disordered in mind; and he rose also, almost expecting a personal attack. But suddenly Lennox paused, and passing his hand over his brow, for he recollected himself all at once, said—

"Pardon me, sir. I am afraid I have been rude." And extending his hand with a faint attempt to smile, he continued—"late griefs have disturbed my health. Besides, there is something in your news which surprises me. Pray, sit down again; and tell me again of this intelligence."

But the visiter had little more to relate. All he knew was that Agnes and her cousin were said to be engaged, and that the preparations for the marriage had actually begun.

"My wife says, sir, that Miss Courtenay and Mr. Beaufort have been pledged from childhood: the match was arranged by the old folks, though not to take place till Agnes was twenty. Mr. Beaufort has been here courting her, more than a year, and some say he cares quite as much for her money as for herself: she's an heiress, you know, in her own right, and has a large property in Charleston."

Lennox had never heard of this before, but it accounted for the presence of the Courtenays in Charleston. Even now, however, he paid no attention to it, for he was lost in grief and amazement at the marriage of Agnes.

"False, false," murmured our hero to himself. "Oh! Agnes, and you pledged yourself never to marry another. But you are like your sex have ever been: fickle as the shadow cast by a summer leaf: ever smiling on present, and forgetting absent friends."

But after a few moments devoted to bitter reflections like these, more charitable feelings took possession of our hero's heart. When could a lover long continue to despise his mistress?

"It cannot be," said our hero, still thinking to himself, utterly forgetful of the presence of a stranger. "It cannot be. If ever a woman loved, Agnes loved when we parted: and surely if ever woman was true, Agnes is. There must be some terrible mistake here. Either she is not going to marry Beaufort, or she thinks I am dead. I will go to her. The risk is not great: I can go in disguise; and I have often ventured my life on less occasions. I will see her: I will again appeal to her: if she spurns me, well; but if, oh! blissful thought, if she returns my love I shall be happy, even if years must elapse before our union."

To decide was to act, for Lennox had all that impetuosity which is so frequently allied to high courage. Recovering himself from his reverie, he dismissed his visiter, accepting his services, and naming that day week for him to rendezvous at Lennox Place, and then, hastily accoutring himself for his expedition, he departed without any attendant, though sufficiently well armed.

The requirements of our story do not demand that we should follow Lennox in his journey to Charleston, where he arrived safely, protected by his disguise. But here his security was at an end. He had not calculated on the number of individuals acquainted with his person, whom he would be likely to meet; and he was scarcely installed in the obscure hotel to which he had ridden, when he observed a man, after scrutinizing him, rise and leave the apartment. Lennox instantly resolved on seeking some other shelter, but before he could put his purpose in execution, the man returned with a guard of soldiers, and our hero at the same time that he recognized the informer as a deserter from his own regiment, found himself a prisoner.

"You must come with us, sir," said the officer in command of the guard.

"Whither?" asked Lennox.

"To the guard-house!" was the reply.

Our hero's situation seemed more serious than he had at first thought.

"But cannot you take my parole?" he said, "I am but a prisoner of war; and it is important that I should have the disposal of my own time to attend to the personal business which brought me here."

"I am afraid," said the officer with a smile, though with perfect politeness; "that you look too lightly on your situation. Sir Henry Clinton will be apt to think that an enemy who comes into our quarters thus is a spy rather than a

prisoner of war. However, we must take you to the guard-house to-night, and to-morrow your case can be heard."

With these words Lennox was hurried off, enjoying not the most comfortable feelings in the world, and now for the first time seriously considering the perils into which his rash enterprise had conducted him.

But fate had yet in store for him a last, and more bitter blow. It was toward midnight, and as they passed along, their way led by a stately mansion blazing with lights and echoing with merriment. A carriage had just drawn up before the door, and a party of guests departing were crossing the foot-walk toward it. The officer of the guard drew aside politely for the ladies to pass. This gave Lennox a full view of the approaching gay company. He started back on recognizing Agnes, who, leaning on Mr. Beaufort's arm, looked up into his countenance with an animation not to be mistaken. The officer saw that start, and grasped our hero's arm, as if he thought his prisoner had essayed an escape. But Lennox smiled bitterly and said—

"Lead on! I had no thought of escaping." And then he muttered to himself—"I care not what they do with me now. She loves him."

And when they reached the guard-house, the officer wondered to see how pale and corpse-like his prisoner had become.

CHAPTER VI.—AGNES.

THE morning after his arrest Lennox was carried before Sir Henry Clinton, the royal general then in command of the forces in South Carolina. He was in that state of mind when a man is utterly reckless of life. All through the long hours of the night, instead of seeking sleep, he had been discussing with himself the course he should pursue. He could not reveal the true nature of his visit to Charleston, for that would be to betray his folly, and this pride forbade him to do. But if he remained silent, death would be his inevitable destiny. Yet, on the whole, he courted, rather than shunned this fate. What was there left for him to live for? The dream of his love had been rudely dissipated, and his country was almost hopelessly enslaved. He resolved to act like a brave patriot, and defy the power of these royal oppressors. Then, if Agnes heard of his death, she would attribute it to his devotion to his country. Come what might, she should never triumph in the thought that he loved her after her fickleness and treachery.

When, therefore, Lennox was ushered into the presence of Sir Henry Clinton, he assumed

a part as if he, and not the royal general, was judge. Glancing haughtily and loftily around the room, his eye rested at length on that of the commander-in-chief, which it continued steadily to regard without quailing.

"A bold spirit, by my troth!" muttered Sir Henry, who admired courage, even in a foe: then, speaking aloud, he said, "your name, sir!"

"Major Lennox of the continental army," replied our hero undauntedly, "a name not unknown, perhaps, to your excellency!"

Sir Henry started. From the dress of the person before him he had supposed our hero to be a countryman, or at most a common soldier, but to find him an officer of high rank, and one whose valor had reached even his ears, surprised the royal leader.

"Major Lennox," he said, "I am sorry to see you in this plight—in disguise, and without a pass. You had just arrived in Charleston when you were arrested. Perhaps your pass was forgotten and left among your baggage."

Sir Henry spoke thus, because naturally of a kind heart, he wished the young officer, if possible, to furnish some good excuse why he should not be considered as a spy. But the bold and defying answer of Lennox frustrated this charitable wish.

"Sir Henry," he said, "it may be as well for both of us that this interview should be cut short. I have no pass. I am here in disguise. The fate of American officers under such circumstances is not new to me: send me therefore to the gallows without useless words. I trust I can die like a brave man."

The blood of the few spectators present ran cold at these words, which alone were sufficient to cost him his head.

"Is he tired of his life?" said Sir Henry to himself with vexation, "but I will make another effort," he thought: then speaking aloud, he asked, "Had you any personal business here, Major Lennox? Is there no one to testify that your visit was not that of a spy?"

"No one in Charleston knows anything of my intentions or business here, nor do I feel at liberty to proclaim them. When one's country is trodden under an enemy's hoof, Sir Henry, a brave man and a patriot cares but little to live. Excuse my freedom; and do your duty."

He bowed haughtily; and with a sigh Sir Henry proceeded to write a warrant for the execution of our hero, for, in that terrible war, short was the shrift given to the condemned.

At the same hour of the morning, a large party had assembled in the parlor of Mr. Courtenay's residence. It was composed principally of officers, who, making their morning calls,

had chanced to meet in the reception room of Agnes. Here was the uniform of the grenadier: there the scarlet dress of the dragoon. The epaulette of the captain brushed the shoulder of the field officer. Foremost in this gallant array was Colonel Tarleton, even then celebrated for the daring courage which afterward carried him through many a headlong charge.

One or two female acquaintances were present, but Agnes appeared to be the chief attraction of the morning. The conversation, in the group immediately around her, had been hitherto on the ball of the preceding evening.

"But we must confess," said Tarleton, bowing his proud head gallantly to Agnes, "that Miss Courtenay gathers as many brave gentlemen around her of a morning, as our fair hostess succeeded on doing at her ball. She holds a court of Beauty!" and he glanced around.

"Say rather a regimental review," retorted Agnes laughing; "for, except my two friends yonder, the company is altogether military. Three ladies among a dozen soldiers; surely you intend to take our hearts by storm."

"I'm afraid Beaufort would have a word to say to that," whispered Tarleton, bending down to the ear of Agnes, who colored, but immediately looked up with gravity, and said aloud,

"Nay, Colonel Tarleton, Beaufort is not my guardian. You look incredulous, flattering yourself perhaps that no woman could ever be heart-free, but I assure you Agnes Courtenay is not to be marched in triumph at the chariot wheel of any man. She, at least, is a skeptic in love!"

"What is that, my dear young lady?" said a frank, joyous voice, but one obviously accustomed to command, and immediately a large, fine-looking, military man was seen making his way through the crowd, which opened to receive him. "Are you really going to be so cruel as to tell all these fine fellows you have no heart to lose——"

"Nay! nay! Sir Henry, I did not say that," said Agnes, "you wilfully misrepresent, sir. Even though you are commander-in-chief, I shall have to try you in the court of love where we ladies are supreme, unless you express due penitence for your conduct."

"Really," said Sir Henry Clinton, looking around, and replying in an equally gay tone, "your court of love seems to be better attended than my own levees; and so, as your authority is more potent, I suppose I must make due submission!"

"We are merciful as we are just, Sir Henry, and therefore forgive you," said Agnes. "But pray," she added, altering her tone to one more serious, "will not your excellency be seated?"

She made room for him on the sofa as she spoke, and Sir Henry, with a courtly bow, took the proffered seat.

"I have no doubt now," he said, "that half these young lads would give all they are worth to receive such a compliment. But we old, fatherly fellows always cut out the younger ones—is it not so, Tarleton?"

"Your excellency has a double claim to such distinction," replied that officer. "First, your rank, and then your late treaty with Miss Courtenay. The king of arms and queen of beauty ought always to reign side by side."

"And how are you after the dancing of last night?" said Sir Henry, turning with a kind smile on Agnes, and dropping the tone of railery in which he had been speaking.

"Oh! very well," replied our heroine, "a little fatigued perhaps; but the proposal of another ball would quite revive me. We ladies, you know, love dancing as passionately as children love toys."

"More than your lovers, I presume?" said Sir Henry archly.

"Infinitely," retorted Agnes. "Toys will be quiet which lovers will not."

"By the bye," said Tarleton, "I understand your way to the carriage was stopped for a time, last night, by the guard carrying some drunken soldier to prison. I hope you were not frightened."

"Not at all. But I don't think it was an intoxicated soldier. He seemed dressed in plain clothes, though I did not notice particularly."

"Miss Courtenay is right," said Sir Henry Clinton, with a grave look—"it was not a drunken soldier but a spy!"

"A spy!" echoed a dozen voices.

"Yes! I did not intend to mention the circumstance, for Miss Courtenay is the angel of peace, and cares not to hear of the stern and bloody punishment awarded by our code."

"Poor fellow!" said Agnes, in a tone of commiseration. "And is he really a spy?"

"There can be no doubt of it," replied Sir Henry. "I have spent the last hour in his examination, and he will not give any account of himself. He has no pass to show either: how he managed to get by the sentries puzzles me, and must be enquired into, for such lack of discipline cannot be tolerated." And Sir Henry looked up at the group of officers, with a meaning reproof which more than one felt to his heart's core.

"Poor, poor man," said Agnes. "I wonder if he has a mother living."

"I do not know," said Sir Henry.

"And are there no mitigating circumstances?"

"My dear young lady," said Sir Henry kindly, "if you had been as long in the army as I have, you would not regard this subject with so much false sympathy. Death to a spy is one of the first laws of war, and is a principle of self-defence. The spy seeks to involve hundreds, nay! often thousands, in death: he should not, therefore, complain if he meets the fate he intended for others."

Agnes made no reply, but sighed.

"However, I must confess," said Sir Henry, after a pause, "that I feel some little regret at having to condemn this young man. He is a gentleman by birth, education and fortune, but has got himself involved with the rebels, and came hither, no doubt, to examine our condition, and with treasonable intent. I wished, if possible, to give him some loop-hole by which to escape death, and questioned him for that purpose; but he was too noble-minded to stoop to the slightest prevarication, and told me that all he had to say was that he was an American officer here, in our camp, without leave. He appears to invoke death by his conduct—strange that gallant gentlemen can be so infatuated."

This narrative had arrested the attention of every one, and there was profound silence while Sir Henry Clinton spoke. When he ceased, one of those present asked—

"What is his name, your excellency?"

"Lennox. Major Lennox, of one of the oldest families of this state," replied Sir Henry. "But heavens! Miss Courtenay are you fainting? Gentlemen, stand aside to give her air. Air, air!"

Agnes had in fact swooned. She was one of those who had listened with the deepest interest to Sir Henry's narrative, but without imagining she had any acquaintance with the subject of it. When, however, she heard the name of Lennox pronounced she turned deadly pale, and while making an effort to rise in order to leave the apartment, would have fallen over if Sir Henry had not caught her in his arms.

All was now confusion. Servants came hurrying in with water, and soon Agnes, still insensible, was carried up to her dressing-room, whither her female acquaintances followed, while the gentlemen took their leave in a body, wondering what had produced the fainting fit. One suggested it was the heat, and another attributed it to Sir Henry's narrative; but not a person present assigned, or suspected the true cause.

Sir Henry Clinton alone remained, a privilege his rank and age accorded him. In a short time word was brought him that Agnes had recovered, but was still very weak. On receiving this information he too departed. (TO BE CONCLUDED.)

AGNES COURTENAY.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 80.

"Now listen, listen, ladies fair,
And gallant knights so debonnaire,
Now listen, listen all."

CHAPTER VII.—THE CONFESSION.

HEAVILY and with pain Agnes opened her eyes after her swoon. The first object that met her gaze was Mrs. Stewart bending over her, with the powerful stimulant she had used in restoring consciousness. But the effort was beyond the strength of Agnes and she closed her eyes heavily with a sigh.

After awhile, however, she again looked up, and still Mrs. Stewart was standing over her. At first the memory of Agnes was confused, and she stared around the room, wondering how she came there; then gradually the incidents of the morning broke on her, and she half started from bed.

"Lie still, my dear young lady," said Mrs. Stewart soothingly, "you are very weak."

Agnes sank back on the pillow, for she felt that in truth she was very feeble; but she waved her hand faintly toward the door, where several servants stood with anxious faces. Mrs. Stewart understood the mute gesture and requested them to leave the room. Agnes gazed eagerly until they had disappeared and the door was closed behind them, then, clasping Mrs. Stewart's hand between both of hers, she asked breathlessly.

"Is it all true, or have I been dreaming? Oh! do not deceive me."

Mrs. Stewart was not present in the parlor at the time that Agnes swooned, consequently she was yet ignorant of the cause of the fainting fit. Had she even heard Sir Henry Clinton's words, she would have been at a loss to connect them with the agitation of Agnes. Hence she answered.

"Is what true, my dear? Nay! be not agitated. You have been dreaming. Lie quiet, my love, and see if you cannot get some sleep. You will be better after it."

Agnes looked earnestly at the speaker, as if half suspecting Mrs. Stewart was deceiving her, but no one could doubt the sincerity of that compassionate countenance.

"Then you have not heard it?" said Agnes, rising in bed. "They did not tell you that Major Lennox had been arrested here in Charleston last night, and was to be executed as a spy."

"Major Lennox!" exclaimed Mrs. Stewart, in tones of horror; then, remembering that she had never heard Agnes mention being acquainted with him, she exclaimed—

"But how does that affect you, my dear? Surely he is no relative of yours!"

Agnes covered her face with both her hands, to hide the burning blushes which deluged it, and then burst into a hysterical flood of tears. Mrs. Stewart needed no words to understand it all now; and with a tact that went to the heart of the poor sufferer, she took Agnes tenderly in her arms and pressed her to her bosom as a mother would her babe. For some minutes Agnes sobbed uncontrollably. At length her agitation somewhat subsided, and she said, though in a whisper and with her face still concealed on Mrs. Stewart's bosom,

"You will not betray me. No one ever knew this secret, or should have known it while I lived. Promise me you will not betray me."

"I promise," said Mrs. Stewart fervently.

"And now, dearest, do take some rest."

"Oh! no, no," eagerly replied Agnes, starting wildly up from her resting-place, "I cannot lie here while *his* life is in danger. He must be saved."

"I was going myself to do all I could in his favor," answered Mrs. Stewart. "I owe him a debt of gratitude for saving my husband's life, as I have often told you. No, my dear lady, I could not sleep another night if Major Lennox was to continue in peril. But you, my love, are not equal to this task."

"And can I sleep?" said Agnes, with passionate emphasis. "Oh! Mrs. Stewart, the best thing you can do for me is to let me have my way. To remain quiet would kill me. Something I must be doing."

Mrs. Stewart mused a moment: she saw there was truth in what Agnes said. "But what would you do, my dear?" she asked.

"Has Sir Henry Clinton gone?" demanded Agnes eagerly.

"He has. He waited awhile, and sent to inquire how you were, then took his leave."

Agnes had now risen from the bed. She thrust her delicate foot into a slipper, gathered her disarranged hair together in her hand, and walked toward the toilette, speaking as she went. A sudden and mighty change had come over her, and was betokened by the flashing eye, the compressed lip, the energetic step. Every look and movement was instinct with high resolution.

"He must be sent after," she said. "I will see Sir Henry myself. Help me to attire myself. Or stay, let a servant go and inquire when Sir Henry can grant me an interview: say I solicit one immediately if possible. You will accompany me, my dear Mrs. Stewart, will you not?"

"Willingly. And indeed I see no other way than this you propose."

"There is none," said Agnes.

Mrs. Stewart was absent scarcely a minute. When she returned, Agnes was seated at her toilet, busy in dressing her disordered hair.

"Let me do that for you," said Mrs. Stewart. "I know you must yet be weak. It will be some time before the messenger can return: and the interval will afford ample leisure to finish your toilet."

Agnes resigned the task with a sigh and sank back into her chair, where she remained silent and apparently sunk in thought. Suddenly she started half up, and said,

"Tell me truly, Mrs. Stewart. Promise me you will tell me truly what I shall ask!"

Astonished at this eagerness of manner, but anxious to soothe the excited girl in any way, Mrs. Stewart gave the pledge required.

"Ask me freely, my dear. I will answer truly."

Agnes, with her eyes fixed on Mrs. Stewart's face, had awaited the reply; and now, with equal eagerness, she demanded.

"Then tell me if you think I have acted as though I was going to marry my cousin, Mr. Beaufort."

Mrs. Stewart's eyes fell before that earnest gaze, and she answered evasively.

"I always thought until to-day that you were engaged to him."

The color fled from the cheek of Agnes, and she became pale as death.

"You are not honest with me," she said. "You do not tell me all you think. You believe I have shown him such encouragement as entitles him to claim my hand, or charge me with coquetry."

Mrs. Stewart made no answer, but continued busy with her task.

"And have I been blind so long?" said Agnes. "Col. Tarleton alluded to Beaufort this morning, and others have done so also since we came to Charleston. Have I been unconsciously giving him encouragement?"

"All I have heard to-day astonishes me, and alters so many of my pre-conceived notions," said Mrs. Stewart, "that I can scarcely believe but I am in a dream. Every one in the household fancies you intend to marry Mr. Beaufort, even your father cherishes the idea, or I am mistaken: I never before heard that you even knew Major Lennox. Where did you meet him?"

Mrs. Stewart spoke thus because she saw that, in her present agitated state, Agnes could not be silent, that words were a relief to her.

A burning blush came over the cheek of Agnes, and reached even to her snowy bosom. She was quiet a moment, and then replied.

"Yes! I owe it to you and to myself to tell all now. How have I been misjudged. I have no mother, and you have been so much of a one to me of late, that it seems a relief to impart to you my confidence."

She sighed, mused a second and began.

"Mr. Beaufort is a first cousin of mine, the son of my mother's only brother. I must go back to the past generation that you may understand my story. My mother then, you ought to know, was the daughter of an English baronet of large fortune, and, as usual, it was expected that the estate would go with the title to her brother, and that only the small portion of a daughter of the house would be hers, about ten thousand pounds. But my grandfather was a stern, miserly man, while his son was reckless and improvident as many young men are. Altercations in consequence frequently took place between the parent and boy, and finally in a moment of anger at hearing of some heavy gambling debts, my grandfather executed a deed, cutting off my uncle and settling all his estate, that was not entailed, on my mother and on her children. In a very short time afterward he died.

"The property left to my uncle, the new baronet, was a mere pittance, being only the manorial house, the park, and a few farms. My uncle did not deserve such severity, for he was scarcely as improvident as others of his rank and age, and with a suitable allowance would not have got into difficulties. Consequently, my mother never regarded the property as her own, and she would have returned it to her brother, but that it was settled on her in such a way that she could not do so. She, however, offered to relinquish the income of it, but her brother absolutely refused to accept a penny, and set himself down to make the best of the slender estate really his. When my uncle married, it became a favorite scheme between him and my mother, that their children should be united in marriage; and this was the only way in which her high-spirited brother would consent to receive any part of the family estates back. Had my uncle still been blessed with daughters, it was the intention of him and my parents to have united my brother to one of his female cousins, but though two such were born, both died. It was only two years ago that the plan was altered, and my cousin and myself substituted in the place of the others. Fred is really without fortune enough to maintain decently the rank of a country squire, much less

that of a baronet. At the time the proposal was first broached I was a giddy girl, and thought little of marriage, nor did I consider this tacit betrothal in a more serious light even after my cousin had been in America some months. I liked him well enough: he was gay, easy, and good-looking. At that time I thought not of more serious matters. It was not until Major Lennox came to visit us—he was my brother's most intimate friend at Oxford—that I discovered what love was."

Agnes paused and placed her hand before her face to hide the burning blush that overspread it at these words. For a moment too she seemed unable to speak from emotion, but rallying herself by an effort she continued.

"Oh! we little know how fate sometimes overshadows us. We trifle with its messenger, without perceiving our peril, until it is too late. My acquaintance with Major Lennox began in a bantering manner, and was kept up for some time in the same way. He was fond of railery, and gaiety has always been my foible. We were constantly together. Unconsciously I began to bestow my leisure wholly on my brother's guest, yet still I was fatally ignorant of my danger. I thought of him continually when I was alone, and in my attire began to follow his tastes. All this I did innocently, little imagining the state of my heart which prompted it. At length, one day, Fred, who had politely left Major Lennox to engross all my time, asked me to ride with him, and I went of course. On my return I found Major Lennox was angry, but at what I did not know. Open and unsuspecting in character, and knowing little of the world; I went up to him that evening when alone, and demanded the reasons of his conduct, which pained me more than I wished to confess even to myself. The interview resulted in his expressing his penitence, and in my bursting into tears.

"I went to my chamber that night, enlightened as to the nature of my feelings. I loved Major Lennox. Oh! what a thrill of delight was mine, for his conduct assured me that he loved me in return. The happiest dreams I ever had were on that night.

"But with morning came other thoughts. How would this affect Mr. Beaufort? I shrank from contemplating the idea. I esteemed my cousin. He was kind, obliging, even deeply respectful to me—should I dash all his hopes in life? I had heretofore dismissed the subject of my marriage from my thoughts, regarding it as an affair that must of course occur some day, but which it was not necessary to think of until then. I now discovered that this indifference sprang from the fact that I did not love him;

that, from the nature of our characters, I could never love him. Believe me there are many whom we may cherish as warm friends, yet whom we cannot love.

"Terrible was the struggle that ensued. It ended in my resolving to forget Major Lennox, and be true to the honor of our house. But I found that it is a different thing, when one's affections are their own, to contemplate a marriage with a being unloved, than when one is in love with another. I could not forget Major Lennox: a marriage with my cousin appeared hateful. I determined, however, never to wed another, for I could not forget my parents' wishes.

"I now endeavored, in every way, to prevent Major Lennox making the declaration which I saw daily trembling on his lips. Circumstances in the end frustrated all my caution. He offered himself."

Here Agnes paused, and then, recovering composure, proceeded to detail the interview with her lover, her refusal, the dinner scene, and his departure.

"And have you never seen him since?"

"Never," said Agnes, and again she blushed crimson. "It is true that my words held out no hope, but I am sure my tell-tale manner revealed my love."

"And will you then interest yourself for him?"

The eye of Agnes flashed proudly, and she drew her fine form up to its full height as she replied,

"If all my love had been eradicated from my bosom—if I hated Major Lennox and sought only for revenge, still I would solicit his pardon and let him know that Agnes Courtenay had set him free as the sweetest morsel on which her anger could feed."

"You love him not then!"

"Would I did not," exclaimed Agnes, her lofty expression changing to one of anguish. "Though he has deserted me, yet my heart finds excuses for him. I told him we never could be united as long as he and my father differed in this war, and I know I should despise him for changing his convictions. So there is no hope. He sees this, and has doubtless long since acted on it. Absence has obliterated the memory of me.

"Besides," she continued rapidly, as if thinking aloud, "it is better he should forget me. It would break my father's heart to see me marry Major Lennox. Then Fred, poor Fred, I pity while I reject him. He at least knows his fate, or ought to, for I have always acted in a manner to convince him that we could never

be married." She paused; and added, "yet if my demeanor, honest as I thought it, has deceived him: if he has not been able to see that the attentions pity claimed were not the result of love: if, in short, his heart is hopelessly lost, and my conduct has misled him, honor will compel me to marry him at last. Oh! just heaven," she said, lifting her eyes above, "to what misery dost thou condemn me."

"Ah! my dear young lady," said Mrs. Stewart, "you look too much on the darker aspect of things. Perhaps Mr. Beaufort does not love you: certainly, though your conduct has misled persons ignorant of your peculiar circumstances, it cannot have misled him. Moreover, Major Lennox may yet love you—let me see him and ascertain this——"

Agnes started to her feet at these words, her bosom heaving, her person trembling, her whole demeanor betraying excessive agitation. In breathless sentences she exclaimed—

"Not for the world—never breathe a syllable to betray my love—I have your promise, remember—oh! how he would scorn me."

She buried her face in her hands at these words and burst into a violent fit of weeping. Her tears were still flowing freely, when there was a knock at the door. It was the servant with Sir Henry Clinton's compliments, and a courteous message that he would do himself the honor to call on Miss Courtenay at her father's, for that, in consequence of her late indisposition, he could not permit her to take the trouble of calling on him.

Agnes ceased weeping, bathed her eyes and awaited the announcement of Sir Henry's arrival.

CHAPTER VIII.—LIFE OR DEATH.

THOUGH Sir Henry, who was a shrewd observer, suspected that the approaching interview with Agnes had something to do with her swoon, and the swoon itself with his mention of Major Lennox, he nevertheless failed to unriddle the puzzle to his complete satisfaction, though he thought of nothing else during his walk to Mr. Courtenay's residence. The conclusion which he deemed most rational was that Major Lennox was a distant relative of the Courtenays, and that Agnes had sent for him to solicit the pardon of the prisoner. But on this point he resolved to be inflexible.

"Major Lennox has given himself no chance to escape, and he must abide by the consequences," said Sir Henry mentally, as he took his seat in Mr. Courtenay's parlor, after bidding the servant announce him.

It was not until Agnes had approached the door, and stood with her hand almost on the

lock, that the full consciousness of the step she was about to take burst on her. Hitherto, carried away by the one engrossing thought of the peril of Lennox, she had considered only in what way to save him, but now she reflected on the want of maiden modesty which her application might imply to Sir Henry Clinton, but most of all she shrank from that revelation of her love which was tacitly conveyed by her intercession. She paused, therefore, irresolute. Her knees tottered under her, and she felt the crimson tide rushing to her forehead. But this wavering lasted only a minute. Everything hung on her decision she reflected, and at that thought she summoned courage and entered the room.

Sir Henry rose to meet her, but her heart beat so violently and her eyes suddenly grew so dim, that she thought she should faint, and sank immediately into a chair, without daring to look into his face to see if its expression was favorable, for she already imagined he knew all, and felt like a guilty thing in his presence.

"In what way can I befriend Miss Courtenay?" said Sir Henry kindly, taking his usual seat beside her.

The deference and sympathy expressed in his voice and manner reassured Agnes, who ventured to look up, and pronounce the name of Major Lennox.

Sir Henry's countenance instantly fell; but Agnes, gathering courage, proceeded.

"I desired this interview, Sir Henry," she said, "in order to intercede for that unfortunate gentleman. I am sure I can answer for him that he is no spy. Those who are acquainted with him will exonerate him from anything so dishonorable. Commute his punishment into anything else you please. I am sure, Sir Henry," she exclaimed with a heightened color, "you will not refuse me this request, which the loyalty of our house emboldens me to ask."

"Major Lennox ought to be flattered by the interest you take in him, but——"

"Nay, Sir Henry, no buts, if you please," said Agnes, trying to assume a playfulness she was far from feeling. "You surely cannot refuse a lady."

"I fear I must in this instance," he replied gravely.

"Oh! no, no, you must not," cried Agnes, her face turning a shade paler.

"My dear young lady," said Sir Henry, half rising, "these serious matters are not fit to be discussed before one of your kind-hearted sex. I am sure that, if I could see your father, he would be satisfied with the reasons which actuate me. Duty is sometimes unpleasant,

and I confess it to be so in the present instance. But for all that, I fear Major Lennox must die. Allow me to explain this necessity at full to your father."

"Not for the world," exclaimed Agnes breathlessly. "I would not for the world he knew of this petition of mine. Major Lennox is no connexion of the family, as you appear to suppose."

She had risen, pale and eager, to detain Sir Henry by his arm when he first began to speak, and as he proceeded the most intense emotions were called up to her face: but, at this mention of her father's name, she seemed, for the moment, to lose sight of everything but the possibility of an interview taking place between him and Sir Henry. Then, the instant she had spoken, she reflected what construction Sir Henry might place on her words, and looked down abashed and trembling.

"Major Lennox not a connexion of the family?" said Sir Henry slowly, and in surprise.

"No," replied Agnes faintly, without raising her eyes.

Sir Henry looked at these signs of confusion. He saw Agnes, one moment pale, then crimsoned to the brow, and a sudden suspicion flashed on him. Like all the rest he had taken rumor to be fact, and believed in the reputed engagement of Beaufort and Agnes. Even yet he could scarcely discard these former convictions and give credit to the suspicion which had risen to his mind. Almost mechanically he said,

"Then how can you be interested in him?"

Agnes trembled excessively: by a sudden impulse she covered her face with her hands, and burying it on the sofa, burst into sobbing. She felt that her secret was discovered, and for awhile maidenly shame overcame every other emotion.

Sir Henry stood regarding her, with deep interest depicted on his face. To see the proud, high-spirited Agnes Courtenay in tears was a spectacle to move a bosom even harder than his. He knew, from her independent character, that she must suffer excessively. After a while he spoke, and his voice was low and full of kindness.

"Pardon me," he said. "I did not suppose this subject was one to agitate you so much."

Still Agnes continued to weep: at last she controlled herself and spoke.

"Then you will spare him. Oh! believe me, believe me he is not guilty."

Her upraised eyes in which the tears still glittered were irresistible: Sir Henry felt that he could not refuse her petition without almost breaking that once gay heart.

"His life shall be spared," he said. "I cannot

promise you his freedom, but his life shall be spared."

"God bless you for these words!" ejaculated Agnes. Then, after a pause on both sides for some moments, she said, with some embarrassment,

"You will say nothing of my interposition in this affair, Sir Henry, I hope. I ask it as a favor."

"Is not even Major Lennox to know to whom he is indebted for his life?" he asked in surprise.

"Oh! never—he is the last one I would have informed of it."

Sir Henry was confounded at these words: he saw there was a mystery; but he gave the required promise.

He then took his departure, but as he paced thoughtfully down the street, he sighed and said,

"Poor girl! So beautiful and with such a brilliant destiny before her, to be the victim of an unfortunate attachment, for such she obviously is."

In less than a fortnight Mr. Courtenay, his daughter and Mr. Beaufort sailed for England in one of his majesty's ships, which offered unexpectedly a passage, some weeks earlier than they had hoped for one. Their departure left a blank in Charleston. The gaiety and wit of Agnes, combined with her tact as a hostess, had created quite a sensation during her stay there; and what made her absence more to be regretted, was the fact that these qualities seemed to grow brighter during the last two weeks of her visit. Sir Henry Clinton alone knew that, under that joyous exterior, beat a sorrowing bosom. Often, when he saw Agnes the centre of a brilliant circle, herself the most dazzling star in it, he sighed and turned away.

Lennox received the intelligence of his reprieve within an hour after Sir Henry left Agnes, on the day succeeding his arrest. Our hero was plunged in gloomy thought when the messenger entered. The excitement of the morning had passed away, but nevertheless when he saw the cell-door open, supposing it to be an officer with the warrant for his execution, he rose with a lofty and composed air to receive his visitor.

"I am ready," he said, "when is it to be?"

"You mistake me," replied the official, "his excellency has been pleased to commute your punishment into imprisonment at his pleasure, or until you are regularly exchanged. It is fortunate for you, Major, you had friends. Allow me to congratulate you."

An eager light broke into the eyes of Lennox, and, for an instant, he fancied that Agnes had procured his pardon—for who else was there in Charleston to be interested for him?

"Did you hear who my friends were that have done me this kindness?" he asked breathlessly.

"You should know that better than myself," replied the official. "Some of your loyal connexions, I suppose: all your relatives, I believe, adhere to his gracious majesty."

"True, it must have been some one of them," said Lennox gloomily.

Days passed, and our hero heard nothing from the world without. Notwithstanding the improbability of the conjecture, and in spite of what the official said, he had entertained again, and more than once, the wild dream that Agnes had herself procured the commutation of his penalty. How his heart thrilled at the very thought! But as day after day passed, and he received no message from either her or her father, he was forced to confess that he had deluded himself; and, when he came to this conclusion, he almost regretted that he had not been suffered to die.

At last he heard from his jailer, incidentally, that the Courtenays had sailed for Europe, and at this intelligence the last faint gleam of his illusion faded forever. He cursed then his own folly in believing, for a moment, that Agnes ever loved him. Yet he could not bring himself to hate her. In what had she ever deceived him? Had he not been the victim rather of his own folly?

It was a few days after he received this intelligence that the door of his cell was flung open and a female entered, leading a young lad. He looked up and recognized Mrs. Stewart. Never before had the suspicion crossed his mind that she had been the instrument in soliciting his reprieve, but now it flashed on him and was corroborated by her embarrassment.

"I could not leave Charleston," she said, as if in apology for her intrusion, "without first calling to see you, in order to learn if I could be of advantage to you before I go, or afterward. The Courtenays, my relatives, with whom I have been residing, sailed some time earlier than we expected; and I am going to rejoin my husband, or find a home with my sister in the western part of the colony."

"You can do nothing for me," said Lennox, "but accept my thanks for your offer. I already owe you much—too much—a life that would be scarcely worth retaining, if it were not for my country."

"You owe me nothing, while I owed to your follower my husband's life."

"Nay! do I not owe it to you that I am now alive? Though you have tried to keep your agency concealed, I know that you only, of all Charleston, interested yourself in my favor."

Mrs. Stewart was on the point of uttering a denial, when she reflected that, by so doing, she might involve Agnes in suspicion, and remembering her solemn promise to our heroine, she suffered Lennox to remain under his delusion.

"I have no power now to show my gratitude as I ought; but accept this ring," said Lennox, "as a proof of my sincerity: and if the day should ever come when fortune frowns darkly on you, claim my aid." And, as he spoke, he drew off a signet ring he had always worn and offered it to Mrs. Stewart. But she drew back.

"Nay! if not for yourself, at least for your little boy, take it. We know not the changes this world has in store for us. The day may come when I may be of service to him."

"I will take it for him, then," said Mrs. Stewart, "or till one, who has a better right, claims it."

There was a silence of a minute, and then Lennox, who could not after all avoid speaking on the subject next his heart, said,

"I once knew your friends, the Courtenays. Were they quite well?"

In spite of every exertion, his voice was tremulous, and the keen woman's observation of Mrs. Stewart detected in this an unmistakable evidence of his continued interest in Agnes.

The conversation that followed was conducted, on her part, with an eager, if not laudable desire to confirm, or banish her suspicion. She noticed that Lennox never wearied of hearing her speak of Agnes, and that, while he strove to appear outwardly composed, he was internally agitated. The result convinced her that he loved Agnes as devotedly as ever.

Oh! how she regretted then the promise she had made to Agnes neither to betray her love, nor reveal her agency in the reprieve of Lennox. How she regretted that Agnes had sailed for Europe.

There was a settled melancholy on Lennox, painful to see. He only expressed one hope, that by a speedy exchange, he might find death in the ranks of the army.

"Ah! if Agnes had been less proud," said Mrs. Stewart as she left the prison, "and consented that I should visit Major Lennox, all would have been right ere this. But no—it is still for the best. Agnes, I know, would not marry against her father's will, and Mr. Courtenay would as soon see her in her coffin as united to a rebel. She will feel herself bound to marry Mr. Beaufort."

That night she left Charleston, and, after an interview with her husband, who, now that Lennox was a prisoner, determined to join Marion or Sumpter, she departed for her sister's: and it

was many a long month before she again heard of either Lennox or Agnes.

CHAPTER IX.—THE SURPRISE.

MORE than two years had elapsed since the events of the last chapter, and in the interval the independence of the colonies had been acknowledged. Peace in consequence had once more been restored to the land. The royal armies were withdrawn. Washington had resigned his command, and society was settling down from its late disturbed condition to order and quiet.

In a large and splendid mansion in Philadelphia, two gentlemen were seated, toward the close of a mild spring afternoon, at a dinner-table from which the cloth had already been removed, leaving only the wine and dessert. Both of the persons, however, appeared to have indulged sparingly in the glass. An animated conversation had given place to silence as the twilight drew on. At length the elder of the two gentlemen spoke.

"Lennox," he said, "I often wonder you do not marry. Can it be that you still remember that pretty Virginian, who jilted you so shamefully?"

"Nay, colonel, you presume on our friendship," replied our hero, for it was he, with a sad smile. "Miss Courtenay never gave me encouragement, and I cannot, therefore, accuse her of coquetry. But the recollection of her, I frankly confess, will always prevent my marrying."

"Pshaw! you are jesting. To be thus love-sick after a lapse of years is incomprehensible and shames your manhood. Shake off this melancholy. There is many a pretty girl sighing for the bold Major, whose feats at Yorktown still ring in the world's ears. Allow me to introduce you to the beauties and heiresses of Philadelphia, though, since you are so rich yourself, you care little about the latter, I suppose."

"I care for none of them," replied our hero, "and I pray you, colonel, refrain hereafter touching on this subject. Once for all, know that my affection for Miss Courtenay was no idle fancy; but a deep and lasting sentiment, founded, I shall continue to believe, on an instinctive appreciation of her high qualities. Perhaps indeed it was these very qualities which made me unsuccessful in my suit. Her father was a loyalist and she knew would be deeply hurt at her union with me: and I have sometimes dreamed that, but for this, she might have loved me. Yet I cannot but admire her the more for sacrificing her preference to her strict notions of filial duty. Believe me, a wife of such principles is a jewel to a husband."

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"I'm afraid that you worship an ideal perfection. When you were in prison in Charleston and condemned to die, did she come near you, did she send you any message, did she intercede in your behalf? As the sister of your friend, she was called on to show some concern for your peril. Had she loved you, even, the least bit, she would have done so; but, on the contrary, you would have died, unless Mrs. Stewart had stepped forward and procured your reprieve."

"That is true," said Lennox, with a sigh. "It is no doubt foolish to speak of Agnes as having ever wasted a thought on me; but, for all that, I fear I shall never love another. Certainly I see none of her sex without instituting comparisons by no means favorable to them."

"Infatuation!" said his friend laughingly. "But pray, how did Mrs. Stewart obtain your reprieve? She had but little influence, for her husband was known to be a whig."

"I never could tell. But she must have interested some of my tory connexions. At that time I scarcely felt grateful for the boon."

"Ah! you were not to die then: fate reserved you for Yorktown, and many another glorious field. I know not what we should have done without you."

The conversation now digressed to the war. The host had been the senior officer of Lennox, after the latter had been exchanged, and they had many reminiscences to recur to. It was not until a late hour that they separated.

The discussion, however, recalled Mrs. Stewart to the mind of Lennox, and when he went home he sat long thinking of her. Since their parting in the prison at Charleston he had never seen her.

"I should like to meet her again," he said, thinking aloud. "Perhaps she has heard from the Courtenays. Let me see, Agnes has now been married three years."

As he uttered these words he heaved a profound sigh, and his eyes happened to fall on his writing-desk, where lay a note which had been placed there in his absence, and which he had not seen before. He picked it up and examined it. It was directed in a strange hand, but obviously that of a female. A ring fell out as he broke the seal. He recognized it as the one he had given to Mrs. Stewart. The contents of the letter ran thus:—

"If Major Lennox has not forgotten an old friend, she will be happy to see him to-morrow, at No. — T — street. The ring enclosed is the authority for this freedom."

"Mrs. Stewart, the very one of whom I was thinking!" exclaimed Lennox. "Poor lady,

perhaps she is in difficulties, or she may wish my influence for her son."

The next morning, as soon as etiquette would permit, Lennox set forth to make his visit. He was somewhat surprised to find the house to which he had been directed, a large and imposing structure with a wide hall running through the centre. He looked at the note again; the number was the same. He knocked.

A servant in livery opened the door.

"Is Mrs. Stewart in?" he said.

The servant stared. Lennox repeated the question.

"Is your mistress in?" he asked. "If so, take her up this card."

The servant bowed low and ushering Lennox into the parlor, retired: but, directly he returned and announced that his mistress would be down in a moment.

The apartment in which Lennox found himself was a large and lofty one, with folding doors, and opening in the rear into an extensive garden. The furniture of the room was elegant and luxurious. Nearly opposite to where he sat was a large Chinese screen of great beauty and costliness. He was still bewildered at all he saw around him, when he heard a foot-step approaching from a door apparently behind the screen.

He rose from his chair to welcome his hostess. Could he believe his eyes? The intruder was not Mrs. Stewart, but what was once Agnes Courtenay. She wore a dress of black silk, and never had she looked lovelier. Advancing toward him with a smile, she held out her hand. But Lennox, bewildered and amazed, was speechless; he started back, and clasped his hand to his brow. Yet it was no dream. Agnes stood before him radiant in ten thousand charms, and smiling encouragingly, though with the least possible bit of mischief in her countenance as she beheld his confusion.

"Mrs. Beaufort!" at length he exclaimed, astonishment depicted in every lineament of his face.

"And why not Agnes as of old?" she said.

"Can it be possible? I—I came to see—Mrs. Stewart. Is this Miss Courtenay that was?"

His embarrassment and perplexity appeared by no means to create sympathy on the part of the lady: her countenance became more mirthful each moment, and at length she broke into a merry laugh.

The face of Lennox began to redden, but his hostess, seeing this, checked her mirth, and altering her tone to one of seriousness, said,

"And do you not know that I am still Miss Courtenay?"

She had scarcely uttered the words before Lennox, reassured by them, as well as by her encouraging smile, grasped her hand eagerly and said,

"And you were never married! You are the one who sent for me."

"Nay, nay!" cried Agnes, all her old gaiety returning, "you will crush my poor little hand. There, now that it is at liberty, I will answer your questions, provided you do not put more than a hundred in one breath. But first, Major Lennox, be seated."

She threw herself into a splendidly carved *fauteuil*, and Lennox seated himself at her side. He was still bewildered like one in a dream: only a delicious sense of happiness was stealing over him.

"Do I indeed see aright?" he exclaimed. "Are the hopes visionary I begin to entertain? Oh! speak, Agnes, and terminate my suspense—am I still loved, as I have always loved?"

It was her turn now to look embarrassed. She cast her eyes on the floor, while the roseate blushes dyed her cheek, and crimsoned her neck down to the bosom, which began to heave in agitation. But her little hand remained hanging listlessly over the arm of the *fauteuil*, and Lennox, encouraged by her demeanor, took it again and pressed it. The pressure was gently returned.

An hour after this, Lennox and Agnes still sat together in that parlor. The interval had been employed in those mutual confessions which are so dear to lovers. Agnes had told Lennox her history since they last parted, and he, in return, had informed her of his. But with most of this she was already acquainted. Mrs. Stewart having been the agent who had kept her informed of it.

The story of Agnes is soon told. Arrived in England, her cousin earnestly pressed his suit. But Agnes, after a struggle with herself, resolved to make him her confidant in order that he might know her motives in refusing him. Beaufort was disappointed, and perhaps, also, his vanity suffered somewhat, but he acted like a man of honor and took on himself the responsibility of declining to Mr. Courtenay the projected alliance. Fortunately, however, his feelings were not very deeply interested in his suit: he was indeed one of those persons easily impressible, but with whom no passion is very profound or lasting; and in less than a year he married a young lady of a disposition similar to his own, and having besides the recommendation of a very large fortune. He was, Agnes said, as happy as he could be in consequence.

About this time her father was taken ill. His sickness was long and lingering, and during its

progress he had leisure to reconsider some of his prejudices, and among others those which he entertained against the American patriots. In the quiet of the sick chamber he saw events in a different light from what he had during the heated partizanship of active life: and Agnes, ere she closed his eyes, had the gratification to learn that he inclined to those opinions which she herself had so long secretly entertained.

If anything could mitigate the poignancy of her grief for so great a loss as that of her only surviving parent, it was the intelligence which she received from Mrs. Stewart in a letter about this time. After detailing her visit to the cell of Lennox, and her own convictions of his unalterable love, that lady proceeded to state that it was no secret among the friends of our hero, who was now again in the army, that he continued deeply and irrevocably attached to Agnes. Mrs. Stewart implored our heroine no longer to do injustice to Lennox. "I would have written all this before," she concluded, "but I thought it best not to do so until I was sure whether or not you were engaged to Mr. Beaufort."

Agnes was a different being, from the hour she received this letter. Her old buoyancy of spirits was not long in returning. The year of mourning for her father was now nearly elapsed, and she determined to return to America and make amends to Lennox for the injustice she had done to him. But she resolved that, in doing so, she would carry out a little plot of her own, in order to satisfy herself that Lennox still continued to love her.

Accordingly she wrote to Mrs. Stewart and Mr. Stewart to meet her at Philadelphia, offering the latter the situation of steward of her estates, and intending to travel, under his escort to Charleston. She had scarcely arrived in port, however, when she heard that Lennox was in Philadelphia.

From Mrs. Stewart she obtained the ring which summoned Lennox to her presence: and in his flushed and embarrassed manner she saw full proof of his constancy. The house where she received him was that of one of her friends.

"And it was you that, at Charleston, saved the life I was so eager to throw away," exclaimed Lennox in delight. "Ah! that life shall now be doubly dear to me."

"I hope it will, for my sake," said the now blushing Agnes.

The marriage that, in due time, followed, was one of the most splendid seen at that day in Philadelphia. After the ceremony the bride and bridegroom departed for their estates in the south, and thereafter spent their time between the ancestral home of Lennox in South Carolina,

and a lovely plantation which Agnes possessed in her own right not far from Courtenay Hall.

Heaven, as if in requital for the sufferings they had undergone, made their subsequent path through life happy and pleasant. The gay spirits of Agnes were not lost after her marriage, but long continued to shed sunshine and joy around her husband's hearth.

CROAKERS AND CROAKING.

BY "F. E. F.," AUTHOR OF A "MARRIAGE
OF CONVENIENCE," &c.

"Come, let us set our careful breasts,
Like Philomel, against the thorn,
To aggravate the inward grief
That makes her accents so forlorn." HOOD.

"DON'T you think it is time to have the matting put down?" said Mrs. Winthrop in a plaintive voice to her eldest daughter, as they sat at the breakfast-table. "This bright sun," she continued mournfully, "will soon fade these colors so that the carpet will be ruined—and then I don't know what we shall do, for I do not expect ever to be able to afford another," and here she sighed dolefully.

Miss Winthrop made no objection to the suggestion, only adding in the same sad key, "that people said it was going to be a dreadful moth year," whereupon the melancholy alternative of leaving the carpet to the sun or moth was discussed a little; but finally the fear of the sun prevailed, and Mrs. Winthrop desired her youngest daughter Helen, to write a note after breakfast "to the upholsterer to request him to send up some of his people to take up the carpet."

Helen, who had been absent (having been educated away) long enough to be rather a stranger to home ways, was a little surprised at what seemed to her the inconsistency of her mother's never expecting to be able to afford another carpet, and yet of sending to the upholsterer to have the present one taken up.

"Why, mamma, I should think our own servants might do it," she said.

"Oh! no, my dear," replied her mother, "it's a great deal of trouble to have it properly packed away in camphor. These people understand it, and the expense is not much."

Mrs. Winthrop said this in the same sad tone, as if the evil was an inevitable one, so Helen said no more.

"I see," she continued to her eldest daughter, "that the Franklin Bank has failed."

"Has it?" ejaculated Miss Winthrop. "Oh! that is very bad."

Helen was startled by the manner in which this piece of news was communicated and received, and held her breath a minute to hear what was to follow. But Mrs. Winthrop merely asked her daughter to pass her the muffins, and said no more. Presently Helen gathered courage to say,

"Have you much stock in that bank, mamma?"

"No, my dear, I've no stock there at all,"

she replied as mournfully as if it was quite a misfortune to own nothing in a broken bank.

"Then its failure is nothing to us," said Helen, "though I am sorry for those whom it does affect."

"There's no telling that," replied her mother.

"Why, mother, how can it?" said Helen smiling, "if you own nothing there."

"I don't know my dear," she answered, "but it may. If it creates a pressure in the money market, stocks will fall."

Helen looked serious again, not that she understood what her mother meant exactly, but she felt that they were threatened by misfortune in some way, and her heart sank within her.

"How late the boys are," resumed Mrs. Winthrop, again in an accent of most patient suffering: "did you knock at their door, Fanny? It's time Frank was off to college. Pray call him again."

Just as she said this the door opened, and a fine looking youth of sixteen or seventeen came in and took his place at table.

"Do, Fanny," said his mother, "pour out Frank's coffee at once. It's late. He should be off now."

"It's not eight yet, mother," replied the lad. "I never go till nine."

Mrs. Winthrop only sighed.

"Frank," said his eldest sister, "is it true that young Seldon is suspended?"

"Yes," replied her brother. "Where did you hear that?"

"Mrs. Ormsbee told me," she answered.

"What business is it of hers? What an old busy body she is," said the youth half angrily, for, boy-like, he resented any one's repeating school and college scrapes.

"Disgrace travels fast my son," rejoined Mrs. Winthrop. "Poor Mrs. Seldon! I knew her well. Harriet Forsythe she was. And a very sweet, pretty creature she was. Her husband too was an excellent, worthy man. And this is their son. Poor thing! I am sorry she has so much trouble with her boys."

This was said so sympathizingly that Frank flashed up and said—

"I don't know of any trouble that she has with her boys."

"Don't you call this trouble?" said his mother reproachfully—"I don't know of anything that can wring a mother's heart more sorely than a son's disgrace."

"Tom Seldon's in no disgrace," said Frank stoutly. "He happened to get in a little muss, and the Prets found out, but that's all."

"Pray, Frank, don't talk such slang," said

Miss Winthrop, in a tone rather less sad, but still in the same key as her mother's.

"It's melancholy to hear the language that the young men of the present day use," remarked Mrs. Winthrop.

"Oh, mother!" said Frank laughing.

"Yes, my dear," continued his mother, "I say it is one of the most melancholy signs of the times. Slang and tobacco shows that a young man is in low company—and then comes brandy and water, and ruin."

Poor Frank swallowed his coffee and felt that there was no use in saying more. He had called Tom Seldon's "affair" a "muss," and the President the "Prets," and thereby brought upon himself a direct charge of slang, with an implication of low company and general dissipation. So he bundled up his books and was off.

"I wish Frank would not associate with that young Seldon," remarked Mrs. Winthrop, as her son left the room.

"What plagues boys are!" plaintively ejaculated Miss Winthrop.

Helen loved Frank, and felt very sad to think he was getting in bad ways, as she supposed he must from what her mother and sister said.

"Go tell Harry," said Mrs. Winthrop to her daughter, "that breakfast is nearly over."

"Harry is so late. If he would only come home earlier o'nights! I left the hall lamp burning for him last night, for he had not come in when I went to bed," (which happened to be by nine o'clock) and then Mrs. Winthrop sighed worse than before, and helped herself again to muffins and another cup of coffee.

Presently she resumed the topic of the Seldons, and, like most people advanced in life, commenced with the history of the family from the time of the flood, and told of the first time she saw Mrs. Seldon as a bride, the dress she wore, &c., and got quite cheerful from her reminiscences, and then told some anecdotes of Mr. Seldon as a young man, particularly an "affair" that he and a brother of her own were engaged in, that made quite a talk at the time, &c.

"Who, uncle John!" said Helen, opening her eyes very wide with surprise at hearing of the gay, youthful pranks of her grave, serious, religious uncle. "But, mother, I thought you said Mr. Seldon was such a good man."

"He is my dear an excellent, worthy man."

"When did this affair happen you were just telling about?"

"Not long before his marriage," replied her mother.

"After he was grown up!" exclaimed Helen. "Then indeed, mamma, I think we may not

condemn poor Tom so hastily. This business of his nothing to his father's scrape, and that you don't seem to think much of. Really, mother, I expect the boys of the present day are quite as good as they were in those times."

Two or three messages meantime were despatched to Harry, who had not yet made his appearance; and then Mrs. Winthrop had some complaints to make of one of the women servants, which was responded to by Miss Winthrop in such a manner that Helen quite wondered her mother kept the woman at all.

She suggested something of the kind when her mother said—"she was a faithful creature, and had lived with her so long," and then proceeded to make out she could not possibly do without her.

The general tone of the breakfast-table conversation had been such that poor Helen felt quite depressed. She had been to a party the evening before, but she felt that this was no time to talk it over, and indeed she had scarcely the heart to do it. She began to look back upon herself as very unfeeling to have enjoyed it at the time as much as she had done. Presently, however, Mrs. Winthrop said—

"Helen you have not told us about the party last night," (for Helen had been matronized by an aunt, her mother feeling it too great an exertion to go with her daughters in society,) "was it pleasant?"

"Delightful," replied Helen.

"Was it indeed?" said Mrs. Winthrop, with a sort of sad surprise—"and you really enjoyed it? Did you dance?"

"Yes, every dance."

"Really!" exclaimed her mother, quite breathless at the idea of such exertions.

And when Helen proceeded to give an account of the people and dresses she had seen, her mother, to her surprise, listened with considerable interest, (for your indolent persons always like gossip) and when she asked about the supper it was with real animation.

Harry Winthrop, a handsome, fashionable looking young man, now entered.

Every one else having finished before he came down, he was soon left to breakfast by himself, Helen remaining, however, at table with the paper in her hand.

"Harry," said she in a subdued, half fearful voice, "do you know that the Franklin Bank has failed?"

"Yes," answered he carelessly, "I heard it last night."

Helen was quite surprised at the cool manner in which he took it, and said after a moment's pause—

"Do you think it will hurt us?"

"Hurt us, child," said her brother laughing, "how can it? We own nothing there."

"No—but mamma seemed to think it might affect stocks."

"And if it did," said Harry, "what then? Mother does not own even five thousand dollars worth of stock in the world. Everything she has is in bond and mortgage, you know."

"Is it?" said Helen, drawing the first long breath she had breathed since she sat down to breakfast. "But are you sure, Harry? Mother seemed so low spirited."

"Sure, bless you, yes, Helen. But don't you know if mother heard of a failure in the East Indies, she would talk as if we had lost all. It's only a way she has."

"But Fanny," pursued Helen, "seemed to think so too."

"Fanny," continued Harry, "looks and talks so too, because she is used to it, I know of no other reason, without indeed she likes it. Some people seem to find a kind of luxury in making themselves miserable. For heaven's sake, Helen, don't you get to croak too."

Helen laughed, and said she certainly would not if she could help it, as "she had no natural taste for low spirits," but presently said—

"Harry, how is Frank getting on?"

"Frank? very well. Why?"

"I don't know," replied Helen, "but mother did not seem satisfied with him. She is anxious about this intimacy with young Seldon."

"Seldon? Why, what's the matter with him?"

"I don't know, but they seem to think he is a bad boy. He has been suspended."

"Pshaw," said Harry, "Seldon is a clever lad enough. I did hear the boys had got in a piece of mischief, and the old President being accused of being pretty slack, took it in his head to make an example of some of them—more to show his own discipline, I suspect, which people don't think the best in the world, than for any thing the boys did. So Seldon is one of them, is he?"

"Yes—then you don't think him a dangerous friend for Frank?"

"Dangerous! nonsense. What notions you have got your head filled with, Helen."

"Did you find the lamp burning when you came in last night?" asked Helen—"mother told me to light it, but the wick was so short I am afraid it burnt out soon."

"It was burning very well. I came in just after you—I saw my uncle's carriage turn the corner as I came down the street. Did you have a pleasant party?"

"Yes, delightful. Where were you?"
 "At the Club."
 "Oh, Harry," said Helen reproachfully—"why do you pass all your evenings there?"
 "Because it is so doleful here, my dear. Mother and Fanny spend the evenings in the back parlor, with one melancholy looking light, that seems to cast nothing but shadows—and then they do nothing but croak."
 "Oh, Harry!"
 "It's a fact. You want to know the truth, and now you have it, Helen?"
 "Just tell me one thing, Harry—are we very poor or not?"

"Desperate poor in spirit, Helen, but in pocket, very well off. Now give me that paper, if you please, for I must be down town in half an hour."
 Helen's heart was amazingly relieved by this conversation.

The breakfast things were scarcely cleared away before her aunt, Mrs. Harper, came in, whom Mrs. Winthrop greeted with a mournful
 "Well, sister, how do ye do."

"Very well," returned the other cheerfully. "It's such a fine day you ought to go out. I was afraid you might be out already, and so I came early to tell you what a sensation Helen created last night. She was quite the belle of the room."

"Was she? poor child!" said her mother, with a sad smile.

"Indeed she was," replied Mrs. Harper with animation. "You ought to have been there."

"I go to parties," exclaimed Mrs. Winthrop.

"Yes—why not? You are a younger woman than I am," resumed her sister-in-law—"you would enjoy it, I am sure."

"Oh, my dear!"

"I was asked again and again who Helen was; and a dozen of the best men in the room desired to be introduced to her. I was quite proud of her, I assure you."

"Indeed! And people thought her pretty? And she enjoys it, poor thing?" But Mrs. Winthrop seemed to think it must be a "*triste plaisir*."

Now if she had only gone with her daughter instead of going to bed at nine o'clock, she would have done wiser. But she had fallen into indolent habits, and consequently gave up society, and living a good deal alone, grew moping and melancholy about nothing. Her eldest daughter being very much of the same nervous temperament, soon fell into the same way of feeling and thinking, and the boys finding no place such an intolerable bore as home, very naturally staid out.

"Helen," said her aunt, as her niece just then

entered the room, "as your mother does not seem inclined to go out, shall I call for you to go to Mrs. Farleys to-night?"

Helen looked at her mother, who said—

"Do you really wish to go, my love?"

"Yes, certainly, mamma."

"Do you!" continued Mrs. Winthrop, in evident surprise that there was anything on earth so spirited and young as to like society and admiration.

"Well then, sister, I wish you would take her if you can."

"Certainly," replied Mrs. Harper—"I will be here by ten o'clock, Helen."

"Mother," said Helen, "why don't we have a fire in the front room?"

"Why I don't know, my dear. None of us like to see company. And the sun is so dreadfully on that room."

"That's the reason I like it," said Helen—"it's the most cheerful room in the house. Besides I like to see morning company if you have no objection."

"Would you my child?" said Mrs. Winthrop, perfectly surprised at any one's being equal to and liking such exertions—"well, order a fire."

"Mother," said Helen, a bright idea striking her, "I wish you would let me undertake the management of the front parlor."

"Do anything you like with it, Helen, only don't ask me to sit there."

When Harry came home in the evening, he found to his surprise a bright fire burning in the front parlor, and Helen prettily dressed singing at the piano, a solar lamp that "cast no shadows," burning brilliantly on the table.

"Why, Helen, what's this? Do you expect anybody this evening?"

"Nobody in particular, Harry."

"Now this is pleasant. This is something like. Do keep it up, Helen."

"I mean to," she replied. "I have abandoned the *ancien régime*—mamma says I may do as I like in this room."

Mrs. Winthrop now looked in, quite astonished at the glare of light, but Helen and her boys seemed so gay she did not know after all if she disliked it. And then Helen presided at the tea-table before she went up to dress for Mrs. Farleys. The boys actually staid at home that evening! And when Helen came down dressed for the party looking so bright and pretty, Harry really offered to go with her.

"Who is that pretty creature?" asked Miss Laurence, as Helen entered the ball-room.

"Miss Winthrop."

"That the daughter of that poor forlorn, poky Mrs. Winthrop."

"Yes."

"How could she have the spirit to grow up so tall and handsome in that gloomy house?" continued the young lady laughing. "I should as soon have expected to see a cabbage rose come out of a cellar."

It was wonderful, the change that one bright spirit can effect in a household. Helen's presence seemed like sunlight and music in the house. Mrs. Winthrop would smile sadly indeed when she heard her daughter's merry laugh and say—

"What spirits she has, poor child," (as if it was a very melancholy possession.) "It's a great thing for her though," (as if having nothing else a merciful Providence had made it up to her in cheerfulness) "for after all men like a cheerful woman." And then she would sigh as if it was a great task to be happy.

Fanny at first seemed to think it rather unfeeling in Helen to be so gay: but somehow she soon fell into the way of smiling more and croaking less.

"Helen," said Harry, "I expect the young Crawfords here this evening—they want to be introduced to you."

"Now, that's what I always wanted, Harry," said his mother reproachfully. "But you never would bring your young friends home with you."

"No, mother, not to that back parlor—no one wants to spend the evening in the dark. But now that we live like other people, I am not only willing but glad to ask young men here. I always have felt mean at not being able to do so before."

"I am sure, my dear, you might always have had anything you wanted," said Mrs. Winthrop, rather hurt by the remark.

And so they might perhaps—only they never had. It is the part of woman to make home cheerful, and that was what Mrs. Winthrop did not understand.

The reign of sunshine did not last long, however. Helen married before the end of her second season, and gradually everything fell back to its old tone at home. First the solar lamp got out of order—and then Mrs. Winthrop could not be bored by presiding at the tea-table—and Fanny in her heart loved a melancholy cup with her mother in the half lighted back parlor—and very soon the servant took upon herself to discontinue the fire in the drawing-room, and no one ordered it lighted, and then all was just as gloomy and forlorn and dark as ever.

Not before, however, Harry had got a taste for a cheerful home. The club no longer satisfied him. And before Helen had been established

two years in her own neat house, Harry became engaged to a pretty, bright little girl, whose chief attraction was her high animal spirits.

"You will like her, Helen," he said to his sister, "for she is such a sweet tempered, happy creature. And do you know I think cheerfulness the first of requisites in a wife?"

"Not quite the first, Harry," said his sister, smiling. "I think we may let principles come before."

"No," returned Harry stoutly. "No—if I had to choose between the whole catalogue of sins and croaking, I would prefer the sins. Certainly no charm equals that of a cheerful temper. Its riches—its health—its music—its sunshine—in short every tittle. Give me a wife "that's contented wi' little and canty wi' mair."

To make a happy fireside clime

To weans and wife,

That's the true pathos and sublime

Of human life.

THE STUDENT'S LOVE.

BY C. DONALD MACLEOD.

"This, my son, was dead and is alive again," was lost and is found."—*St. Luke, XV., 32.*

I.—ISADORE.

FAR down upon a smooth green lawn that sloped gently toward the brink of the Hudson, stood, and now stands an old-fashioned but most comfortable house. There were old trees around it, and the hedges were old, and the box borders of the flower-beds were old, and the bees and birds were the old-fashioned, happy-hearted, humming kind that would not come about one of your new cottage orneés. And best of all was the old honey-suckle, that had grown and grown for fifty years, until it had come to consider itself the owner of the whole establishment. Ah, those old things—how one learns to love them! Old things remind one of old friends; the loved of the far long-ago, friends that come back to me from heaven, in the depths of the quiet night, and tell me to remember the lost. But life is not forever; and by and by I will lie down in the dust, and be at peace beside them.

Day faded: night approached; and one by one came out the enduring stars. Then from the vine-wreathed porch of that cottage issued two lovers. The one was a beautiful girl of sixteen, pure as a summer's sky, the other was a young man of noble aspect. But of him we must speak more at length.

Henry Effingham was the orphan son of English parents; a man of splendid education, lofty, natural endowments, and a most tireless love for and search after the beautiful. Inheriting but little on the death of his parents, even *that* was now almost exhausted; and the world was beginning to teach him those lessons which it always imparts to poverty. And, by the way, how common is the want of distinction between the vulgar and the poor. He is not the poor man who was born to labor, whose simple wants met simple satisfaction, whose desires were trained within the boundaries of narrow means. The true poor man is the poor gentleman of birth and education, full of high desire, nursed in luxury, the essence of whose life is refinement.

"Well, Harry, are you beginning to get rich yet?" said his fair companion.

"No, dear Isadore; as yet I see no prospect of wealth and happier days."

"Are you so very unhappy now?"

"I am happy always when with you dearest. But when away my life is all one longing for the time when you will be at my side forever."

Isadore sighed.

"Why do you sigh, *cara mia*?"

"I thought that, perhaps, we might never be side by side, until we were joined in the grave. Happier than now I cannot be while the mystery of my parentage is unexplained."

"Tell me what you know of it," said Effingham.

"I know but little," replied Isadore. "Seventeen years ago, upon the twelfth of October, a watchman on one of the wharves of New York, heard the cry of a child, apparently from the water. Looking over the pier he saw a white body, kept above water by having been caught upon a projecting spike. Stooping down, he reached and drew up the form of an infant. Carrying it in his arms he proceeded to look for assistance. The only house in which he could discover a light, was one in which a mother was watching the dead body of her child. The watchman told his story at the door: it was repeated to the mourner, and by her the child was received; sent, as she said, by God, to replace that which she had lost. That woman was my so called parent, Mrs. Peyton, and the child was myself. And now," she continued, "will you, whom they call so proud, yet love one whose very name is the gift of a stranger?"

"Love you, Isadore? I have nothing else in all the world that I *may* love."

"Well, Harry, go make your fortune, and then——"

"And then, Isadore?"

II.—WARNER.

EFFINGHAM returned to New York accordingly, and to his laborious and thankless life, that of a teacher. But as month after month passed, and no prospect of better times appeared, his heart sickened and almost died within him.

At length he became introduced to a gentleman named Warner, who had two sons in need of a tutor. This person was a man of vast wealth, and taking a fancy to Effingham, offered him a large salary and a place in his house as a friend, rather than as a mere teacher.

Mr. Warner soon became much attached to Effingham. He loved to draw out the fire and enthusiasm of the young man's mind, as though it were a pleasant thing to see in another what he himself had lost forever. Harry's heart in return warmed to his patron: and the settled sorrow of the calm eye and the pallor of the face awoke the student's sympathy.

One evening they were alone in the library. The conversation had been on works of fiction, which Mr. Warner objected to as a waste of

talent, and which Harry defended as pictures of life and manners, and even, when rightly used, as important moral auxiliaries.

"But even granting," said Harry, "that works of fiction are useless, still you must not condemn their authors so severely; for many have been driven to this use of their talents to escape starvation. A work of fiction saved Goldsmith from a jail. Poverty, sir, is a hard ruler: some it drives even to the darkness of crime!"

Suddenly Warner's face grew livid as death. The big drops stood upon his forehead: his hands clenched; he sunk back in his chair and gasped, "Good heaven, sir!" exclaimed Harry, much startled—"what is the matter? I will call for assistance," and he moved toward the door.

"No—no!" gasped Warner; and Effingham remained. He threw up the window and wheeled the sufferer's chair toward it. In a few moments Warner recovered: then he bent down his face upon his hands, and Harry saw that his whole frame shook with heavy sobs.

"Shall I leave you, sir?" he asked.

"No," said Warner hoarsely—"no; remain! The hand of God is in this too. Not a subject can I converse on, but leads to the same dreadful point. I hear no music, I see no object in all this fair earth that does not recall the same dark memory. Sit down, Mr. Effingham, and listen of my poverty. Truly you said that it tempts to crime."

He paused a few moments as if perfectly to subdue his emotion, and then continued—

"I was born of wealthy parents, and luxuriously educated. I married where my father hated: and he drove me from his house with a curse. My poor mother managed to get and to send to me five hundred dollars. And with this and my young wife I went into the world.

"It was sometime before I tried to get employment, and then it was too late. Our money had been made to last one year. But I held, at length, the last sixpence in my hand. I bought bread for my wife, and then rushed out to walk the streets for hours, and ponder on the means of obtaining aid. But none came to me.

"When I returned to our garret home I was a father! She held up the babe in her weak arms, but it waited feebly and she drew it back to her bosom. I saw then that she could not nourish it; I saw that one must die: and I could not spare *her* yet: not even to heaven! When she slept——"

He paused again; and again the convulsion shook him.

"I could not give her a nurse; nor even bread for the morrow; for I had nothing—nothing! When she slept I took her babe from her side

and cast it into the river. Ah! those shrieks of hers when she wakened and asked me for her baby! I can hear them even yet in my dreams.

"That night too my father died! And on the next day I was wealthy: I could have coated my house with gold, but I was a murderer!

"She recovered after months of almost idiocy, and in wealth and comfort lived some years; and at last went home to heaven. Thank God! she died, and did not know that I had murdered her child!"

Suddenly flashed upon Effingham the history of Mrs. Peyton's protégé.

"The date, sir," he exclaimed eagerly to Warner—"how many years since?"

"Seventeen years ago, on the twelfth of September," moaned Warner.

"Then you are not a murderer! Your child is alive and I know her," cried Effingham, and he rapidly sketched her history.

The pale, suffering man rose up and seized Effingham by the arms, holding him with the strength of a giant: and looked into his face with wild eyes and quiverings lips.

"Swear it!" he said eagerly.

"It is true, as I believe, so help me God!" said Harry solemnly.

Warner gibbered like an idiot and fell senseless.

III.—THE REWARD.

SUNSET! and again in that old porch sat two figures—the father and his child. And the glory of the fading day streamed down upon them: and lighted up no holier scene in all the scope of its vision—graceful and beautiful the bright clouds floated in the west—glowed the rich skies with crimson and azure, and pale, transparent green, and streaks of burnished gold. The scarlet-plumed hang-bird darted through the air; the swallows wound their mazes on high; the polished poplar leaf glistened in the sun, the "exulting and abounding river" rushed by—God was in all things. And the father looked to heaven, and to river, and to teeming earth, and nothing to him was so beautiful as his recovered child.

"How can I repay you?" he asked Effingham, "for this great treasure?"

The young man, sad and silent, stood beside him and gave no reply. A tear quivered in his proud eye as he turned away and left them.

Then Isadore hid her face in her father's arms, and murmured with a low, sweet music—

"He loved me when I was nameless and poor."

"Thank God!" said the father, "no man that lives would I prefer as a son."

They were married—Isadore and Effingham.

TRUE ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

BY GRACE MANNERS.

"I SHALL never be able to make it out, *sol-fa-a-a-eh*, oh, dear," said Carry Lennox, "I always end with that horrible squeak!" and with a deep sigh she leaned her head on her piano, and mused over the horrors of her *sol-fa-ing* until she began to laugh.

"Why have you stopped practising, my dear?" said a voice from a neighboring room, and Mrs. Lennox a handsome, but rather overdressed lady, entered—"I am sure you have not been an hour at your exercises, and you know the Signor said expressly an hour at the gamut twice a day was the very least you must give."

"And that is two hours too much, mamma. Oh, dear mother, do give up trying to make me an accomplished singer—I have not the power for those showy songs that Signor Gluick teaches."

"You have not the patience, you mean, Caroline; look at your sister, how she sings, and she practised four hours a day for years."

"Then, mamma, one such accomplished daughter is enough; if you only had seen the look of contempt Gluick gave when he heard me singing that pretty little barcarole yesterday, you would own that he has no hopes of making a 'squallini' of me. 'Do you call *that* singing?' said he—I was so mortified I nearly cried."

"But, my dear, you know he says, it is all because you will not open your mouth enough to let out your voice."

"What an unconscionable person he is, mamma, why it was only yesterday, after what he calls 'un grand effort,' that I had to put my hands up to my face, to be sure my mouth had not gone behind my ears—and then he only said it was pretty well. But worse than that, was Fred coming in after he had gone, and telling me that he and George Marion, and two or three others had been in the study all the time, and thought when I was going over the gamuts that some one must be undergoing an operation here, from the discordant groans, as he called them."

"Impertinent fellows," said Mrs. Lennox—"but you must finish this quarter, and then I will consult the Signor as to your capabilities. Now sing me that ballad your father thought so pretty last night."

"That was the barcarole Gluick sneered at so—I love such singing dearly, but defend me from *sol-fa-ing*," and with the greatest spirit

and sweetness, Caroline sang for her mother one of those bewitching Venitian songs that seem so suited to the lips of the bright and gay, and Mrs. Lennox, by her looks, seemed to enjoy it more than she chose to acknowledge.

"Very pretty indeed, my dear—now go on with your practising, for with such a sweet voice, I cannot give up the hope of seeing you equal Matilda—and seriously, Caroline, accomplishments in these days are of such vital importance in the circle in which we move, that no man of wealth or ton ever thinks of a girl as a wife who does not possess them; and singing is such a very company accomplishment that I must insist upon your cultivating it. At two o'clock leave off, and come up to your sister's for me, and we will go and look at those Louis Quatorze chairs I was telling you of," and Mrs. Lennox kissed her daughter and went out; and poor Carry, after shutting all the doors and peeping into the next room to see that no one was there, commenced again at her "groans," as her brother mischievously called them.

Mrs. Lennox was the wife of a rich merchant, one of those money kings that in our favored country, where the road to wealth is open to all that are industrious and enterprising, had achieved a handsome fortune from small beginnings. An honorable, upright, liberal man, he was proud of his success in life, but not proud of his money for money's sake, but as it contributed to the happiness of a wife he dearly loved, and as the means of his being able to heap all sorts of luxuries and elegancies around the children he worshipped; he cared nothing for it for himself—not so Mrs. Lennox, she worshipped mammon. The daughter herself of a poor man, she remembered with horror the many privations she had undergone, and in her gradual rise with her husband from straitened circumstances to great wealth, the remembrance of them pursued her like a phantom, until all of misery seemed comprised in the word "poverty," and all of happiness in that of "wealth." A kind hearted woman, she was liberal to the poor—an uneducated one, she was at times vulgar, and totally devoid of accomplishments, her whole heart and soul was bent upon having accomplished daughters and marrying them to wealthy aristocrats, and so placing them, she fondly hoped, out of reach of the trials she had suffered from herself.

She had met with the greatest success in the establishment of her eldest daughter, a very stylish, accomplished woman, many years the senior of Caroline, who, to her mother's great delight, had very early in her career of belle-ship made an excellent match. True she now

cared nothing for those accomplishments that Mrs. Lennox firmly believed were the main cause of her attracting the attention of the gentleman she married—but devoted to her husband, her children and her house-keeping, never touched her piano but for her little ones to dance, and never sang but some simple song that had charmed her husband in the days of courtship. She had long been an amused spectator of the endeavor of her mother to make out of the wild, gay, "petite" Caroline a repetition of herself—trying to tame her bright little rustic into the same dignified and imposing woman she had been when she grew up. Nature had formed them in different moulds, but the mother thought training would counteract nature, and so she was trying to make Carry sing scientific Italian songs, because her sister with a powerful and brilliant voice used to delight the world with them, while Caroline's "forte" was simple ballads, and joyous, sprightly songs, and to make her a dignified, stately woman, while nature had made her a bright, gay, piquant girl—with eyes dancing with merriment, and a mouth surrounded with a thousand dimples. Poor Mrs. Lennox!—it was a hopeless task.

"Why, Carry, my darling," said Mr. Lennox: "why are you sitting here this sultry morning with all the doors and windows so closely shut, and what was that doleful ditty I heard you singing as I came in? It sounded like one of the seven penitential psalms, and you look marvellously as if you were performing penance. What is the matter, that you have such a doleful face?"

"Oh, papa, no wonder I am the 'ladye of the rueful countenance,' this is a day of misfortune to me."

"Why, Caroline, is your canary dead, or your mocking-bird sick?—those are the greatest misfortunes I ever heard you complaining of, and they are easily remedied."

"No, papa, not quite as bad as that, I must confess—but somehow everything has gone wrong with me to-day; and mamma is so vexed with me, and all for this abominable Italian music," giving her song a slight push.

"Well, dear, tell me what is the trouble, and I will see if I cannot help you out of it," said her father, kissing her fondly—"I hate to see your bright little face so clouded."

"You know, papa, I hate this style of singing. I know I never shall make anything at it, and mamma says I must sing to-night at Mrs. Graham's musical party—so I came here to practise very diligently—but Fred came in and begged so hard that I would just sing over with him those funny little glees he bought yesterday;

and then that sickly looking youth you have in the counting-house came up with a note, and Fred said he had such such a lovely voice, and it would be such a treat to the poor fellow, and so, father, I let him bring him in, and we all went so nicely together, and the glees were so droll that we sang for more than an hour, and mamma came in while we were at it and was so angry. And then the cook had been boasting to her how handy I was—for yesterday I looked into the kitchen just as she was making bread, and it looked like such nice work that I went in and asked her to show me how to do it, and I made up a loaf myself, and mamma scolded me and says I am only fit to live in the back-woods, I have such a turn for working, and none for accomplishments. And I almost wish I did live there sometimes, for I do love to be doing something useful."

"And I do love to see you doing so my darling," said Mr. Lennox, "but as mamma don't like it, and there is no necessity for your being so very thrifty, you had better not help the cook again. I will coax your mother to excuse your singing to-night as you don't like it, and I think all this practising and shutting yourself up is making you look pale. Now I have something to tell you—I have just received a letter from Mr. Templeton, and in it is an invitation for you from his wife to come and see her this summer—should you like to go and rough it there awhile?"

"Should I—oh, dear father, will you let me go?—how kind in Mary to want me—but what does she say?"

"She says," said Mr. Lennox, reading from a letter, "that she wants to see you very much indeed, that she is better off for 'helps' now than she has ever been since she went to Ohio, and can, therefore, be sure of making you comfortable, and that she is very impatient to show you her little daughter, and finally that come you must. Now, Caroline, I have a plan that I think you will like—I must go to Ohio on business in a fortnight: I can take you to Mrs. Templeton's—leave you there for a few weeks, and then take you from there to Saratoga in time for the height of the season. I know your mother has set her heart on being there with you this summer."

"How delightful," exclaimed Caroline—"do you think mamma will consent? I should love to see those wild, great woods that Mary writes about, and to travel over a prairie, and to see all the simple, odd ways they have of living out there. Do beg mother to let me go, will you? Don't say anything about my not singing to-night—I will do my best. Now, papa, do talk

to her about this journey, and I will practise with all diligence."

Mrs. Lennox was at first horrified at the idea. "Caroline," she said, "was quite wild enough without going to the west, and entirely too much given to be fond of working about a house to go where she would have such a chance of indulging her taste—then her music—what was to be done about that?" But her husband by judiciously hinting that, perhaps, when Carry saw what work really was she might take a dislike to it—by reminding her that Mrs. Templeton had a piano, and used to be a delightful musician, and finally, that her daughter was not looking as well as usual, and that it would be a pity she should make her debut at Saratoga, not looking as pretty as she would if in good health, won her consent—and the happy Carry, to her mother's great pleasure, sang that night as sweetly as her own canary. With strict injunctions not to remain longer than the end of July—and a long lecture to Caroline from Mrs. Lennox, on the subject of not fancying any of the Hoosiers she might see in the west—the father and daughter set out on their journey.

A lovely bright day was just drawing to a close, and a gorgeous sunset throwing its golden light on every object, filling the atmosphere with that peculiar radiance, as if gold dust were floating in the air, when Mr. Lennox and his daughter drew up at the home of her friend. A sweet spot it was—an old establishment for that part of the world, it still showed signs of an early settlement in the primitive style of building of one part of the house, where the unbarked logs filled in with clay, showed the veritable log hut of the first settler. It was now but one of the offices attached to the pretty, neat country house that had grown up at its side, and being covered with the same vine that adorned its more stately neighbor, looked like a neat country girl in her russet dress along side of a dignified dame of refined society. A lovely lawn, dotted with clumps of forest trees, sloped from the front of the house down to a bright, dancing rivulet—(river they would call it in England) the banks of which, on the other side, broken and craggy, and crowned with noble trees, formed a picturesque back-ground to the bright green lawn. A short distance down the stream stood a mill, and its drowsy hum could just be heard at the house, breaking the stillness that would otherwise have held undisputed sway in this secluded spot.

Mrs. Templeton's joy at the sight of her young friend can only be appreciated by those who have known the utter deprivation of congenial society there is to the cultivated and

refined females, who may be found scattered about our far away western settlements. True the western part of Ohio is not the *far west*, "par excellence:" but it is far for those who have been brought up in all the comforts and luxuries of an eastern city, as Mrs. Templeton had. Caroline was delighted with her friend's house, enchanted with her baby, and quite wild with the beauty of the views from every window. Her father left her the next morning, promising to be with her in a few weeks, and wondering where the privations were he had heard of Mrs. Templeton's putting up with—"two girls for helps," and a half grown boy in the stable, to look after a pair of horses for Templeton to drive: wife need not have been afraid of Carry learning to love work here. "I never ate better bread and cakes than those damsels made, and everything is in such good keeping—upon my word," soliloquized he, as he rode past the busy mill, and through flourishing grain fields and luxuriant pasture grounds, where the fat, lazy looking cattle were grazing. "I am half tempted to join company with Templeton, buy a farm out here and live on it—but what would my wife say?" and with a hearty laugh at her fanced consternation, he drove on.

Merrily passed the first week with Caroline at Templeton's Mill, as the place was called—she talked with her friend and nursed the baby—she rode every day on horseback, and saw beautiful views, the last always the most perfect—she peeped into the mill and was weighed by the good-natured miller—she won the hearts of all his white headed urchins by fishing with them in the creek, and that of his wife by tending her baby for her a whole hour one washing day, and was very near thinking life in the west as luxurious a thing as life in New York.

"Mary dear," said Mr. Templeton to his wife one day at dinner, a week after our little heroine arrived, "I met at Stamford this morning with an old college chum—Frank Cheston, you have often heard me speak of him. He is travelling about for amusement, and being a great sportsman, I asked him to stay here a while, that I might show him what sport really is. He will be here to-night, and will stay two or three days."

"Very well," said Mrs. Templeton, "I am delighted at your having a chance of talking with an old friend. You with your friend, and I with mine—why, George, we have not had such a treat for a long time? Then, my two girls, I shall be able to enjoy myself without as much care as usual."

"Where is Mr. Cheston from, and what is he like?" said Caroline.

"He is from Charleston, South Carolina," replied Mr. Templeton, "and is more like a shaggy bear than anything else I can think of—he is so whiskered and moustached—he is a very clever fellow, sensible, rich and single, Miss Carry, and though he has the reputation of being a perfect Sybarite in his refinement, he can rough it as well as any fellow I ever saw, and cares little for externals, provided the mind is refined."

"For all that," said Mary, "I am glad we are not in the rough state just now, ain't you, Carry?"

"Oh!" said Caroline, "he will be out shooting all day, I suppose, and too tired to notice whether things are rough or not when he comes home. I am a little afraid of him, I must own, for I have heard he is the greatest exquisite in the Union, and I intend to be the very pink of elegance while he stays, even to singing my hated Italian songs."

In the evening Mr. Cheston arrived, and though about the face as his friend had said, he somewhat resembled a shaggy bear in the redundancy of his beard, that was forgotten in the extreme pleasantness both of his person and manners. It was his whim when in fashionable life in cities, to assume the air and bearing of extreme foppishness, and his remarkable personal advantages enabled him to carry it off with great success. A young man of good sense, he knew that in the back country such manners would only make him ridiculous, and he, therefore, threw them completely aside as a cast off garment, and allowed his native kindness and good taste to have full sway. To Caroline's great delight he showed a decided preference for simple songs, the merrier the better, and after having taught her the very way the Swiss maidens sing the *Ranz des vaches*, as he had heard them a hundred times himself—he finished the evening by singing a German student song that amused her exceedingly, and she retired to rest wondering what her mother would say if she had seen her so merry and unconcerned while talking to the far-famed, fastidious Mr. Frank Cheston.

Early the next morning the gentlemen were off on their hunting excursion before the ladies appeared, leaving word that they would try and send some game home in time for dinner—but before that dinner could be eaten great were the difficulties that had to be surmounted. After Caroline had hushed her pet, the baby, to sleep, and assisted Mrs. Templeton in her daily morning task of washing the breakfast cups, she took a book, and was walking slowly over the lawn to her favorite seat, a fallen tree, that spanned

the brook in a most romantic and shady spot, when she suddenly heard the uncommon sound of wheels, and looking down the lane saw a country wagon approaching the house. She turned back to learn the errand of the driver, and arriving a few moments after he had stopped, had the full benefit of his first address. Mrs. Templeton was standing on the piazza, and after inquiring if she was *Miss* Templeton, he proceeded to say—"I have come for the two helps you have staying with you; (all servants in the west *stay* with you, they never live) their sister Jeminy is to be married next week, and I reckon she calculates upon having them home right off. Will you tell them to hurry, please?"

Caroline looked at her friend, and though consternation was painted on Mrs. Templeton's countenance, they could not help laughing. "You cannot expect that both girls should go," said Mrs. Templeton, addressing the young man—"are you their brother?"

"No, but I 'speck to be before this day in the week comes round again, and Mimy charged me to bring both of 'em—where be they?"

Mrs. Templeton had no need to call them, for both girls made their appearance at the same time—one from the kitchen, the other from the garden with vegetables in her hands. The errand was told, and the result soon guessed at from the pleased expression of their faces. "But girls," said Mrs. Templeton, "you will not both leave me—what shall I do? You know I cannot get another girl anywhere."

"I'm sorry, Miss Templeton," said the elder girl, pushing forward—"but it can't be helped—you see Susy and me, we must go. I did kalkilate upon staying longer with you that's a fact, and that Mimy wouldn't be married 'till August at least—but now mother will want us to home, and father, he never did like our living out any how, and I only thought to stay 'till I'd got enough to set me up in winter clothes. I'll come back in two weeks—will you, Susy? and we can earn the money then."

"If you will stay *now*," said Mrs. Templeton, "only one of you, I will give you a nice winter frock over your earnings, (wages she dared not say.) With two guests in the house, what shall I do without any help?"

"It can't be ma'am—I'm sorry, Miss Templeton, because you always treated me and Susy like ladies should—but we must go. There's Miss Carry to help you take care of the strange man—so I am sure we don't leave you without any *help*. I baked last night, so you've plenty of bread, and Miss Carry, she knows how I made it, for she was looking at me all the time.

Now, Josh, while you feed the *critter*, Susy and me will pack up;" and walking off the "helps" left Mrs. Templeton to her cogitations.

In vain Caroline was sure that there must be somebody in the neighborhood that might be hired, but no. Some were too high to think of living out, and others were so impertinent they could not be borne with, as they must eat at the first table, "being as good as anybody," and Carry saw the two nice "helps" drive off with Josh, leaving Mrs. Templeton with two guests and an infant to care of, and the boy servant sick with the ague. Here was a specimen of the pleasures of western house-keeping.

"What will you do, Mary?" said Caroline, as she met her friend on the stairs with her baby in her arms—"you do not look at all distressed."

"Neither am I, Carry—I am worried I acknowledge, but not distressed: and if it were not for Mr. Cheston's being here I should not be even that, I am so used to these sudden desertions. I do not mind you in the least, as I know you do not care about waiting on yourself, but I wish he was not here just now—I must do the best I can, however, and if little Billy will only get well I can do well enough. I hope my husband will not send home any game for dinner, birds are so troublesome to pick, and though I have been roughing it here so long, Carry, I never could bring myself to prepare a bird for the spit—I can cook it well enough, but the other I *cannot* do."

Alas for her hopes, she had hardly spoken before a tow-headed urchin made his appearance, bearing on his shoulders a large wild turkey, with "Mr. Cheston's compliments," and a note in pencil from her husband, "begging to have it for dinner—a late dinner at two o'clock." Here was a dilemma.

"I think," said Carry, looking dolefully at the bird, "it looks as if it had a great deal inside of it."

"And how we are to get it out I am sure I don't know," said Mrs. Templeton.

"Can't you keep that boy?" said Caroline, with sudden inspiration, "I dare say he knows how to pick a bird, and may be how to fix it altogether—I'll try and bribe him if you are willing."

"I shall be only too thankful if you can," said her friend, and Carry proceeded to fascinate the little tow-head. He refused money "cause he wanted to go and pick wild-strawberries with Sall: and he couldn't buy nothing out here if he had ever so much: and he did not care for the turkey's tail-feathers, cause mother had a bushel of 'em."

"But," said he, after peeping into the parlor,

"You'll make that there piece of furniture sing to-night," pointing to the open piano," I'll pick the turkey for *Miss* Templeton, and mind the baby all day while she's doing chores." The bargain was soon struck, and the bird in process of picking.

"Now," said Carry, "I will run down to the mill and see if I cannot persuade Mrs. Sim to come up here and prepare the turkey for cooking; I will take care of her children, and draw her that picture of the mill I promised her, and may be she will help you besides. Keep her as long as you can, and don't mind my being down there."

"What a bright little genius you are, Caroline," said her friend, as she kissed her—"you are a real help in time of need, and bewitch all you come across."

"Oh!" said Carry smiling, "mamma said once I was only fit for the back woods—so now I will try my bewitching powers upon good Mrs. Sim."

Busy as Mrs. Sim was, she was not proof against the persuasions of Caroline—her spinning-wheel was set aside until afternoon—her sleeping baby consigned in its cradle to our heroine, with the comfortable information that its nap was always two hours long in the morning, and that if she would only draw pictures on the slate for the next youngest, it would never tire of looking at them. The dame departed, thinking more of the condescension of such a nice city young lady in taking charge of her children, than of her own kindness in helping her neighbor. Caroline was speedily absorbed in her self-assumed task—the baby slept a deep sleep. The slate was filled with all sorts of pictures—Noah's ark did not contain a greater variety of beasts and birds than figured on it, and the eyes of the little one, fairly wearied out with staring at them, closed in sleep, and she was carefully consigned to her little nest.

Caroline took out her pencil and paper, and drawing the cradle close to the door, that it might be within reach of her hand in case its little inmate stirred, seated herself on the low step, and prepared to fulfil her promise to the miller's wife by sketching the mill. It stood lower down the road than the cottage, and with its large water-wheel, with the bright water dropping from it like a shower of diamonds, its weather-stained gable turned to the road, with a huge Virginia creeper festooning its peak—the placid mill pond at its side, with the water-lilies nodding to the breeze, and the wide dam, over which the water fell in a sheet of silver, all combined to form a picture that a better artist than our heroine would have delighted to

have sketched. She was so absorbed in her work that time went unheeded by—the baby waked and slept again with a slight jog of its cradle, and the little picture lover crept out of her cot, and nestling herself by the side of the young artist, gazed in quiet awe and wonder at the magic pencil, and still Mrs. Sim came not. But others did. The two gentlemen, tired of their sport, had turned their faces homeward full two hours sooner than they expected. They came down by the brook in that quiet, silent mood that fatigue and over-exertion is so apt to inspire. Mr. Cheston had said that he loved the look of a mill, an old-fashioned water mill: it was nearly always a pretty object, if not a picturesque one, and his friend proposed to take his on their way home, as he thought it a gem in its way.

The cottage was approached first, and truly might Mr. Templeton at that moment boast of its beauty—for there, seated on the low door stone, in her simple white morning dress, her bonnet at her feet, was the pretty Carry, so absorbed with her view down the road that she saw and heard nothing that was on the upper part of it. The old-fashioned porch that was half shadowed by a large oak tree, through which the sunbeams now shone, flickering the steps with glances of light—the rustic cradle, and the sun-browned little girl that was amusing herself with a kitten, and the refined, blooming, beautiful girl, with her pencil in her fingers, and her hand shading her eyes as she looked at the perspective of her drawing, made a tableau that our gentlemen gazed at in mute admiration.

Silently Mr. Cheston drew his friend back—"we will go to the mill another day," said he. "I am not fit," looking at his muddy boots and splashed shooting attire, "to be seen by that beautiful creature—you must smuggle me into the house and let make my toilet before I meet her."

"Ha—ha—ha," laughed Mr. Templeton, as they plunged into the thicket, "I thought the delight of this country was that a man might go all day in his hunting suit, the women were so used to it, and the first pretty girl you see changes your notions?"

"Laugh away—but I tell you I should feel like Osnaburg along side Cambric in the presence of that girl in this rig. I wonder what she is doing at the cottage?"

"I can't tell, I am sure," said Templeton—"but let us sit here and rest—it is hardly twelve o'clock yet, and we don't dine until two, we were to shoot so famously, eh, Frank," so each finding a soft stump they sat down to rest.

Meantime indefatigably had Mrs. Sim worked for her neighbor. She prepared the dreadful turkey—pared the potatoes, washed the kitchen gear, and did all the *hard chores* for Mrs. Templeton, while that lady attended to the lighter parts of the business. And the music-bribed Jemmy nursed the baby and cleaned the knives, and above all, gave the comforting information that his sister, a stout girl of fifteen, was coming home in a day or two, and “would be glad to come and live with Miss Templeton, he knew.” Mrs. Sim returned to her cottage delighted with the picture, and at her children having given no trouble to the kind spoken young lady; and Caroline reached home in time to help her friend set the table, as the lightest work that remained to be done.

We will not follow her in the first fruition of her wishes “to be doing something useful”—she succeeded to perfection, and with many a merry laugh as to “what mamma would say:” she cut bread and arranged dessert with all the handiness of an unaccomplished and usefully brought up young lady. In the evening her making the *furniture* sing was Jemmy’s reward for his day’s work; and her singing herself was Mr. Cheston’s for his day’s tramp.

The next morning brought with it other embarrassments—the bread gave out, thanks to the sporting appetite of the two gentlemen, and though Mr. Templeton good-naturedly assisted his wife in her difficulties, by proposing such a distant shooting excursion as made a cold dinner in the woods necessary, still he said bread and a breakfast must be had, and now Caroline’s much deplored lesson in bread making came into excellent use. True it is, that while her little hands were covered with dough, and her sleeves pushed up to the elbow, the fastidious Mr. Cheston put his head into the kitchen window with the demand, “boy, my boots;” and when with the best grace she could, she told him “he would have to be his own boy and come in for his boots himself,” she felt very much embarrassed. Not so did the gentleman, he not only came in and got his boots, but stood and talked to her, and begged her to go on, and laughed at the discomfitures of the day before, and told her “how he loved, when he was a boy, to watch their old cook make breakfast biscuit, and help her beat them to make them light, and offered to do so for her if she would only give him a little piece of dough.” And then he insisted upon being useful too, and took in the coffee, and was so pleasant, and carried the whole thing off so well that all poor Caroline’s embarrassment was changed into pleasure.

The next day the girl came and relieved the ladies of the drudgery—but still the boy had the chills, and still Mr. Cheston stayed. Carry helped her friend every morning in her household duties, and rode every afternoon with Mr. Cheston, though that gentleman had constantly to saddle the horses with his own aristocratic hands. In the evening music and walks by moonlight on the lovely lawn finished the day, and before Mr. Lennox returned for his daughter, her useful accomplishments were far a head of the ornamental, and she left her friend, assuring her she had never passed so happy a month in her life, which Mrs. Templeton devoutly believed.

When Caroline arrived at Saratoga she found her mother in raptures with a Mr. Cheston, who had been so polite to her—such an elegant, refined, fastidious young man. “I am truly sorry, Carry, to see you looking so plump—you are quite rustic in your appearance, and I am sure Mr. Cheston does not admire healthy looking girls, he is such an exquisite, and so hard to please that he has not been introduced to one of the girls here, though they are all crazy to know him.”

Caroline’s heart fluttered, as with a solemn bow Mr. Cheston was introduced to her by her mother—but Mrs. Lennox’s fluttered still more, when a week after her daughter’s arrival, Mr. Lennox announced to her that he had given his consent to Mr. Cheston to marry Caroline.

In a confidential tête-à-tête that gentleman had with his future mother-in-law, a few days after the engagement, he told her “that his *fancy* had been touched by her daughter’s ornamental accomplishments—but that his *heart* had been won by the cheerfulness and skill she had exhibited in the useful occupations of a woman’s life.”

Mrs. Lennox was puzzled—but Mr. Cheston was too high in her good graces to dispute the point with him, and as Carry was going to be so well married she did not care what it was that had brought about the match—though in her secret soul she always believed it was the Signor’s sol-fa-ing that enabled her daughter to sing the ballads that had first touched Mr. Cheston’s fancy.

“Touch a man’s fancy,” she said, “and the work is half done.”

Reader which do *you* think did the business, the useful or ornamental?

THE GENTEEL CHURCH.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

"I wish, Mr. Morton, you would go and see about that pew to-day: the pews are selling very fast; and Mrs. Seaforth told me there would be none left by the end of the week."

"Well, I suppose I must go," replied her husband, "and yet I hate to leave Mr. Simpson's church: man and boy I have listened to him for thirty years."

"You will always be old-fashioned and vulgar, I am afraid, Mr. Morton, in spite of all I can do," said his lady, in a tone indicating she was provoked. "Don't you see the advantage of taking this pew in Dr. Bowlby's new church? All the fashionable people go there; while only nobodies attend Mr. Simpson's. Your daughters are growing up and need a position: will you ruin their prospects by making them go to a church that is no longer genteel? Parson Simpson, with his old-fashioned notions is quite out of date: people who pretend to be anybody belong to Dr. Bowlby's church."

"I don't know about that," said her husband, "old Mr. Townley goes to Mr. Simpson's, and his word is good for a hundred thousand dollars. Squire Penton is one of his congregation too, and, in my young days, the Pentons held their heads pretty high, for they come of a very old family."

"Pooh! pooh! the Pentons are as poor as church mice, and that you know well, Mr. Morton: they are not in the first circles at all. Then old Mr. Townley is fast getting into his dotage; and, moreover, he is an elder in Mr. Simpson's church. Nobody cares where people like these go. But the people of real fashion—the Bowens, and Clarincourts, and Fitzs—are all members of Dr. Bowlby's church. They are the people your daughters associate with, Mr. Morton: and now that they have built the dear, good doctor a new church, I should never held up my head for shame, if you were not to buy a pew there, and you such a rich man too, Mr. Morton."

"Well, well, say no more about it," said her husband, with the air of a man who was willing to purchase peace by any sacrifice, "I will buy the pew." And taking his hat, he departed to his store.

Mr. Morton was a man who had risen from small beginnings by perseverance, economy, and business talent. He had begun life in a petty grocery shop: but afterward, aspiring to a more extended sphere, he had embarked in the retail dry goods business. His first purchases were

unsuccessful, for he really knew nothing of the new trade in which he had embarked; but by carefully noticing the tastes of the different ladies who came to purchase, he acquired a pretty accurate idea of what his stock should be composed. By the exercise of tact like this he soon obtained a large custom, and at the time of which we write, kept the most fashionable store of the kind in the place. He had already amassed a considerable fortune, and was fast increasing it. He was a plain, sensible man, who never cared for ostentation, and could he have had his own way would have lived in quiet and without pretence.

But this did not suit Mrs. Morton. She was a bustling and ambitious, but weak-minded woman, having, however, considerable energy in certain matters. Thus, ever since her husband had begun to be considered a rich man, and indeed for some time before, she had omitted no effort to get into what she thought "good society." Since her daughters had been growing up, she had been especially tormented by this idea. Originally of a poor, though worthy family, she had learned long since to despise her origin. Like many people of shallow intellect, she had come to regard wealth as the chief test of respectability: poverty in her eyes was a positive disgrace; and the highest happiness of existence was to be recognized by the "higher circles," and talked of by inferiors as belonging to the "haut ton."

In all matters not directly pertaining to business, Mrs. Morton ruled her husband completely; for he—poor, honest man—hated what he called "a fuss," and would yield any point for the sake of peace. He did not altogether approve of his wife's follies, but he gave in to them in order to secure peace. It was this reason which had induced him to move into a fashionable quarter of the city, to set up a carriage, to give an expensive party every year, and to indulge in other expenses for which he was fitted neither by inclination, nor by habits of life.

All Mrs. Morton's efforts, however, had failed to give her a footing in what she considered "good society." True, by dint of an assiduity almost amounting to impertinence, she had forced her acquaintance on several persons belonging to the exclusive set she aspired after; but in spite of her rich entertainments, her humility, and her forwardness, she found she could make no way with others, whom she met often at their houses. The rich and well descended dowager Mrs. Taunton openly turned her back on the aspiring woman, while her highly educated daughters laughed at the blunders, the parvenu, as they called her, was continually making in

conversation. Even those who accepted Mrs. Morton's invitations went home and laughed at the expense she had incurred to entertain them.

This neglect, the poor, infatuated woman could not help but see; yet she never discovered the true reason of it. At first, she thought it was because her house was not fashionable enough, that she was slighted—then because she kept no carriage—then because her furniture was old and out of date. Accordingly she did not rest until she had forced her husband to remove into a larger dwelling, to set up an equipage, and re-furnish his house. But her "El Dorado" being still as distant and unattainable as ever, she came to the conclusion that she was slighted because her husband went to plain Mr. Simpson's meeting-house, and not to the new Gothic edifice of stone where the more fashionable Dr. Bowlby preached. Accordingly she resolved that her husband should purchase a pew at Dr. Bowlby's church, with what success we have seen.

The next Sunday, just as the services were about to begin, Mrs. Morton with her two daughters, all three elaborately over-dressed, sailed up the middle aisle of Dr. Bowlby's new church, and took their seats in the very front pew, which conspicuously lined with crimson velvet and set off with gilded prayer-books, attracted every eye. A slight smile might have been detected on the faces of some of those whom Mrs. Morton had thrust herself in advance of; but the good lady, full of self-complacency at herself, mistook these for tokens of recognition, and bowed to people whom she had often wished to, but never dared address before. Then she carefully spread out her stiff, new silk dress, and with a rustling sound that filled the whole church, she and her daughters sat down.

When the services began, Mrs. Morton, who had never used a prayer-book before, was at first sadly puzzled where to begin; but one of her neighbors seeing her perplexity, with the good breeding of a true lady, kindly pointed out the place: and continued to do so throughout the morning. Neither did she know when to kneel, or when to rise; but was continually making blunders. When the hymn was to be sung she joined in it with a voice that completely overpowered every one in the vicinity, and made the organist turn around on his seat and look from his loft for the owner of those stentorian lungs.

As soon as the services had closed, and while most of the congregation were still on their knees, Mrs. Morton turned her face to the assembly and began recognizing everybody to

whom she had the slightest claims to acquaintance, bowing to them sometimes quite across the church. Then she bustled down the aisle, and got into her carriage, which, newly painted and with the coachman in livery, waited for her. A general, though suppressed smile attended her exit, as it had attended her entrance.

"Who was that *very* vulgar woman that sat in the front pew?" said old Mr. Harcourt to his daughters at dinner. Now the Harcourts were at the head of the set, which, composed of the oldest, wealthiest and most refined people of the place, had resisted every effort of Mrs. Morton's to get a footing among them.

"Oh! that is Mrs. Morton," said his youngest daughter, with a smile which good breeding alone kept from a laugh.

"Mrs. Morton—Mrs. Morton," said the father doubtfully, "what, not the wife of Mr. Morton, the rich retailer?"

"The same," replied his daughter. "Did you see the patronizing air with which she bowed to us, papa?" and here the speaker could no longer restrain a laugh, in which her sisters joined by way of chorus.

"I was not aware you knew her," replied their father gravely. "Mr. Morton is a very estimable man, but his wife seems to be quite vulgar. I hope you will see as little of her as possible."

"Oh! dear, papa, never fear. I could not help smiling at the state Mrs. Morton put on when she came up the aisle, and she mistook our smiles for a recognition and bowed. Only think of her foolish vanity!" And the clear, silvery voice of the speaker rang in laughter.

"I am glad you don't visit her," said the father, smiling in spite of himself at the ludicrous picture his daughter had drawn. "I should have no objection to your knowing any connexion of Mr. Morton's who was as estimable as himself: but his wife, and I fear his daughters, are innately vulgar, as one may see at a glance. Have nothing to do with such people; for they it is who bring discredit on wealth. Riches are sent to us to be usefully employed, not to be wasted in vain show. She was the only person, I believe, who had her carriage out. One's servant and horses ought to have the Sabbath for a day of rest."

Alas! had Mrs. Morton heard these words how would her exultation have faded; for Mr. Harcourt stood at the very head of the community, and was even more respected for his sound views and high moral character, than for his wealth.

Sunday after Sunday, Mrs. Morton made her appearance at church, always with her carriage,

and always most gaudily attired. But she made no headway in forming acquaintances where she most desired. People who, like the Harcourts, were really superior, saw in her every action such evidences of ignorance, bad taste, and vulgarity, that they studiously shunned her. A few, of her own character, who were rich without refinement, and pretended to be fashionable without really knowing what good breeding was, received her approaches; and of these Mrs. Morton was accustomed to converse with considerable pride as her "dear friends," while sheaped their extravagance, folly and pretension. But all who were really the "best society" saw through her manœuvres, laughed at her vanity, and made a jest of her attempt to force herself on them by coming to the GENTEEL CHURCH.

THE BORDER ALARM.

BY J. H. DANA.

THE West is full of traditionary incidents of the old Indian wars, in which the names of Kenton, Girty, Clarke, and others prominently figure. Many a time, when a boy, we have sat in some rude log cabin on a winter night, and as the flame leaped and crackled up the chimney, while the icy wind shrieked outside, we have listened to "hair breadth escapes" and "tragedies dire," until we almost shivered with terror. One of these legends we will proceed to relate.

Toward the close of the last century a gentleman of some fortune had purchased large tracts of land on the western frontier, and selecting a spot of great natural beauty, had there built himself a comfortable, nay! luxurious dwelling for that day and place. On several occasions he had found himself in collision with his red neighbors, and those who had lived longest on the border and best knew the character of the Indians, had more than once warned him to beware of their revenge, which would probably be as sudden and stealthy as it was certain. But Judge Conway only laughed at these warnings. Naturally bold and reckless, an undisturbed life for some years had made him more so: besides the country around his habitation was becoming comparatively thickly settled, which gave him an additional feeling of security.

The Judge had an only daughter, a beautiful girl of seventeen, destined to be the sole heir of his large possessions. No one of the other sex had yet presented himself whom the parent thought wealthy enough for his only child, but in secret, Bertha Conway, had long since decided the question and given her virgin heart to a young and enterprising lawyer of the vicinity, Frederick Warner. But Warner was poor as yet, and the young couple resolved to love on in secret, until the gentleman grew richer, or some favorable opportunity should occur for declaring their passion.

One evening in autumn, while the leaves, though fast changing color, still clung to the trees, Bertha was sitting at her window, when a tall, gaunt man, wiry and muscular, dressed in deer-skin leggins, and with his grey hairs half hidden by a cap of the same material, stopped at the garden fence and leaning carelessly over it, asked if the Judge was at home.

"Oh! is that you, Mr. Ellet—come in, pray. Father has gone down into the thick settlements for a week; but we are always glad to see you. Do come in!" said the silvery voice of Bertha.

"Call me Dan, Miss," said the old hunter

with a smile. "Daddy Dan the young men call me, I s'pose because I was the fust to shoot *bars* in these parts."

"But won't you come in?" said Bertha, sweetly; for the aged hunter was respected by the whole neighborhood, and by none more than our heroine, who loved to listen to his tales of border strife during and before the great Miami war.

"No, thank you," said the old man, taking up his rifle, which he had reclined against the fence, "I only wanted to see the Judge about a leetle bit of land I have to sell, and heerd he'd like to buy. Tell him to stop when he's down my way. I'll just step into the kitchen and take a drink at the pump, and then be moving, for I've a good way to go and night is coming on."

The sweet girl rose herself to attend the old man, and as he took a hearty drink of the pure, cold water, he bowed and wishing her a long life, said,

"And here too is a happy wedding, my dear young lady, and that right soon. I know one, the handsomest lad and the best shot on the border, and who will be a Congressman some of these days, that I hope to live to see dancing with you as groom. May no harm happen you, though if the Judge knew as much of our red-skin neighbors as I do, he wouldn't leave you here alone and almost unprotected, and they having such a grudge against him."

The blushes and embarrassment which the first part of the old man's speech caused her, made Bertha, at the time, inattentive to his closing words; but after he had departed, she began to feel alarmed, a thing she had never done before in the absence of her father. Night came, however, and with it sleep; and in pleasant dreams of her lover Bertha forgot her fears.

Suddenly she was roused from deep slumber by a startling shriek. Awful and shrill it rose on the night, curdling her heart's blood. For a moment she lay trembling and irresolute; but at a repetition of the sound, she hurried on her garments, and summoned courage to rush to the window and look out.

The moon was high in heaven, cloudless, calm and cold. The landscape, flooded in her silvery light, slept in fairy-like repose. At that instant—crack!—a rifle went off close to her casement; and turning her eyes in the direction of the sound, Bertha beheld several dark figures, hideously painted, and armed with rifles and tomahawks.

"The Indians!" she shrieked, and fainting, fell on the floor.

When she recovered her senses her first sensation

was that of a rapid, jolting motion, the violence of which, perhaps, added to the night air, had restored her to animation. Looking around, she found herself supported on a horse by two Indians, while about a dozen others followed in single file behind. Another horse was led by one of the savages. The whole party were moving with great velocity through the forest, the tall heads of whose trees rose overhead, like gigantic monsters in the moonlight.

The savages conversed generally in their own tongue; but now and then in broken English. From a few phrases dropped by them in the latter language, Bertha discovered that they knew who she was, and that she had been made a prisoner in revenge for real or fancied injuries her captors or their tribe had suffered from her father. From the obscure hints dropped, the terrified girl gathered that it was not the intention of the savages to accept a ransom for her; but that her fate would be decided on their arrival at the Indian villages, when death or that which was even more horrible, would be her destiny.

After having travelled with considerable rapidity for nearly two hours, one of the savages turned to his companion, and pointing to the western sky, exclaimed—

"See, the moon is almost down. At dawn the pale faces will be upon our trail."

"The Eagle speaks true, but what does he further say?" replied the Indian thus addressed.

"Let him go on this road," pointing in one direction, answered the other, "and let the little woman and your warriors go on the other, so will the pale faces quarrel which one to take."

"Good, good, my brother speaks wisely," was the answer, and dividing without another word, one party proceeded on the path, while the other, which consisted of four, struck boldly into the forest, leading the horse which carried Bertha. It is needless to say the other beast went with the sister party. By this shrewd arrangement the savages left two trails, exactly alike, behind them: a circumstance which they knew would not fail to puzzle, if not altogether disconcert, any persons who might start in pursuit.

Let us now return to the happy home whence Bertha had been torn. Here, all was horror and dismay. So sudden and unexpected had been the assault of the savages, that many of the household were surprised in their beds. The majority, however, had managed to secrete themselves or escape: the few who, headed by the old overseer, had attempted to save Bertha, were left for dead. The Indians did not fire the dwelling, however, lest they should be detected by the neighbors.

More than an hour after the departure of the savages, one of the cowardly servants who had secreted himself, crept in terror from his hiding place and made his way to the nearest habitation. The alarm once given, the whole country was up in arms. The daring character of the outrage called for speedy action: fathers thought that a like fate might soon befall their own daughters, if this crime was not severely punished; and every homestead accordingly sent forth its one or more rifles, as in olden times the yeomanry of England roused themselves at the cross of fire!

It was nearly daybreak when intelligence of this dark deed reached the small settlement, some miles distant, where Warner, the affianced lover of Bertha, resided. For a moment he was paralyzed by the news; but soon rallying his faculties, he called for a horse, and while it was being saddled, made ready his rifle.

"There is only one man who can save Miss Conway," he said to those around him, "and that is the old hunter, Daddy Dan. He knows an Indian trail as a dog knows the track of a deer. To him I am bound."

"Ay! he can catch the rascals if any one can; but I doubt if even he can do it: for the Indians have such a start," said a bystander.

"We will try at least," said Warner proudly. "I will come back dead on my bier or rescue her!"

With these words he put his horse to a gallop, dashing recklessly right into the forest; while a long and hearty cheer, awoken by his gallant bearing, pursued him from the crowd.

A sharp ride of about three miles brought him to a log-cabin, in the heart of a wild clearing deep in the forest. Flinging himself from the saddle in the very instant his horse checked its career, he knocked furiously at the cabin door, which was soon opened by the old hunter in person.

"Dan, Dan, for God's sake get your rifle!" cried the excited lover.

The old hunter looked in surprise at the flushed countenance and excited mien of the speaker. His first thought was that Warner was intoxicated, but he dismissed this, knowing him to be proverbially temperate. With imperturbable coolness he asked,

"Why, man, what's the matter, you're early to-day?"

In a few words as possible Warner explained, and added—"I knew you would be more likely to find them, than even those who followed their trial, so I've come as fast as horse could carry me."

"What! Mistress Bertha carried off by the heathen varmints!"

"Yes!—but we've not a moment to lose, make haste."

"Easy, squire—for I must call you that, seeing I knew your father before you, who, to speak correctly, was really a pretty fair shot—easy, easy, in this business, you see, my lad, you are entirely too hasty. There's nothing like order as my old mother used to say, and them cursed red varmints are not to be taken or caught so quick. Its rather questionable whether you were right in coming so far from the trail, but I guess if I jit on it, they'll wish they were back again among their wigwams."

"Dan, Dan, are you ready?" exclaimed the impatient lover, almost crazed to see the slowness with which the old man prepared himself.

"Why nearly, lawyer Warner, but there now," he said, as he came forth armed with rifle and hunting-knife, not forgetting a small tin flask of spirits hanging at his side, "don't you be so hasty; just leave your horse here, and come on foot, he'll only bother you among the brush. Well, now, you see there's an old pathway here, about a mile in yonder, and its more than likely they've been in it, and there's a stream runs somewhere there, which would help 'm to 'possum us; at any rate we can but try."

They had hardly, however, gone over the required mile before the old hunter said—

"Now, look close and sharp: just in by yonder chesnut you'll find the path: give it a thorough look, for them Ingens, now, are the greatest foxes you ever seed: but I'm up to them—ha! what do you call that? Whew! as I'm alive if there ain't the print of a horse's hoof, and there a moccasin: ha! ha! ha! what born fools to come so near my campment: they didn't dream I'd be awake and arter 'em before morning."

"Have you found their trail?"

"Hain't I! but here it is, and a fresh one too, why they were by here not long ago—only silent and quick and we'll soon have 'em; do you know how many there were?"

"Something like a dozen, they say."

"You don't say so! why there's been two horses along here, what could they want with two?" exclaimed he in a musing tone: then after a pause he added, "howsomever, let's on arter 'em and 'conitre at any rate, they would have to be great Ingens if I couldn't kill three or four of 'em."

For some time they pursued their way in silence, old Dan intent on preserving the trail, and the lover racked with fear for the safety of his mistress; to overtake and rescue her, if possible, before the capturers could reach their own country, was the leading desire of his heart; little did he care how many the Indians were in

number, for he felt as if his arm alone could crush a host, or rather desperation had wrought him up to such a state, that but two objects floated before his mind, one was to rescue Bertha, and the other, if unsuccessful, to die by the hands of her capturers; quickly, therefore, did he push along, following his elderly companion, and inwardly cursing the slowness with which he seemed to move, wishing for a sight of his enemies, but yet dreading lest they should not be overtaken.

Deeper and deeper they plunged into the forest, and were now advancing at a rapid rate, when suddenly the old hunter came to a dead halt and exclaimed—

"Now I see why they wanted two beasts, the *Ingens thieves*: really they've made a pretty respectable trail: here they've divided now, and which can be the right 'un?"

"Have they separated? Then all may be in vain, and we pursue the wrong track?" said Warner.

"That's truly said, and considering what rale serpents them Ingens are, its *extronary* how they are ever caught; now I know in the last war, that's the revolution under General Washington, blessings on him! that two or three of us got on the track of some of them hard fighters, and they led us up and down for a week before we could come up to them, but then you see they were all sitting together, when down we pounced on 'em, and crack went our rifles, and they just fell over and died. But it won't take us long to catch these fellers now, if we only go coolly to work, and don't spoil the trail with any haste; for we are all fresh on the start, while they've had to come here and skulk about like thieves, for probably a day or two; so that they're pretty tired by this time."

During the delivery of this harangue, Warner was a prey to a thousand tortures, exerting all his knowledge of the forest in determining which trail the more numerous party had pursued, supposing that was the one which contained Bertha; but the savages had been too circumspect for him, as but one foot mark was visible beside that made by the horse. Old Dan, however, as soon as he had finished his observations, lent himself with ardor to the task, and, leaving the path they had hitherto pursued, followed the other trail to the margin of a little stream. Here he paused, and, summoning Warner to his side, gave it as his opinion they should desert their former track and follow this, observing, that "their *dogding* about the stream showed the red skins had something to conceal."

For some time both of the adventurous pursuers continued their examination on either side

of the stream, but all in vain; they trod the ground again with a closer scrutiny, but every trace of their enemy was lost; and then, after standing a moment or so in perplexity, were about returning to try the other path, when old Dan remarked, that perchance they could discover a sandy or gravelly bottom to the stream if they should look further up or down; and instantly plunging in, followed its course for some distance over the hard rocky bottom. His examination was crowned with success, and, recalling Warner with a low whistle from his task, he discovered to him beneath the clear wave, the impress of a horse's hoof at regular distances, and then, pointing far down the stream, he whispered,

"There, there, the young woman has gone this way, don't you see that little piece of her dress on yonder brush? The heathen fools not to watch closer than that; but they can't out-jineral one who's lived in the woods as long as I. But now let's on, and tread lightly and keep close behind me; look out sharp and we'll soon be up to them; they can't be more nor half a dozen, and we'll leave the rest to coolness."

"Ay! Dan, only let's get within rifle shot."

"Coolly, coolly, that's all," returned the imperturbable hunter.

And on they went. Old Dan struck down the stream, and landed at the foot of the bush; a moment was sufficient to discover the trail, which the Indians had striven so hard to hide; and then, breaking down a bush to show the path to those who should follow, the two companions dashed off at once in the pursuit. Over fallen trunks and withered leaves, among the gigantic monsters of the forest, and through the smaller underwood, the old hunter kept his course. Stooping his long body and peering anxiously upon the ground, he threaded the intricacies of the road with amazing quickness, and from covert to glade, like the sure scented bloodhound, dogged the footsteps of his flying foe.

The morning had now come, and the sun rising above the eastern horizon, was beginning to scatter a few rays among the thick canopy of boughs and leaves above, when old Dan and our hero emerged from a dense clump of forest trees, and appeared traversing a more open space of the wood. The feathered inhabitants were flying from tree to tree, and raising their various voices in melody, while here and there a fox peeped forth from his sly covert, or a squirrel hopped fearlessly along. For some minutes past the two had proceeded with increased caution, carefully scanning every little nook, and gazing quickly around them as the

hollow moaning of the wind swept mournfully through the forest. Suddenly, however, the old hunter stooped and remained in an attitude of the deepest attention for more than a minute, then rising up, he gazed intently before him until his gaze fixed upon a spot in the distance. The examination appeared to satisfy him, for he slowly shook his head, and without uttering a syllable, beckoned on his companion, until they had surmounted a gentle rise, when pointing with his forefinger through the intervening trees, he disclosed to view four dark figures moving quickly along, and further ahead a tall Indian leading a horse, upon which sat or rather was supported the captured Bertha.

As the Indians moved on with almost noiseless tread he lost sight of them for a moment, and then again they were seen emerging from behind the trees, Bertha's white dress fluttering in the breeze, as she appeared and disappeared among the windings of the narrow path. Oh, what a moment was that for Warner! The blood rushed back on his heart, and then dashed again through his veins with the impetuosity of a torrent; while his whole frame trembled like an aspen leaf, until the remembrance of what he held at stake came over him. But when he thought of the pursued Indians; of the death or dishonor of his plighted bride; his whole appearance became changed, the lips were compressed tightly together, and when his companion turned to look upon him, he saw his proud eye kindled with an unnatural fire, and the quick glances playing around it like the lightning in a summer cloud.

"He is a brave youth any how," thought the veteran, as he prepared for action.

Not a moment was to be lost, it was obvious that they were as yet unobserved, but the quick watchfulness of the two rear Indians betrayed their apprehensions of danger. The pursuers had not proceeded far before a turning brought them again into full view of the flying party, who were now winding along the edge of a precipitous rock, a few hundred feet before. Quick as thought, the two pursuers sprang behind the neighboring trees to avoid observation, and reconnoitre the position of the other party. The precipice, upon which the Indians were travelling, ran along in the form of an inclined plane, until it was lost in the abruptness of the mountain ridge, that now began to rise before them, broken here and there by natural gorges and ledges, and then stretching boldly forward against the sky. Along the top of this precipice, as we have said, the Indians were now travelling with considerable rapidity, striving to surmount the hill and gain the shelter of the mountains, knowing well it was the only hope

of success in carrying off their captive. To prevent this, however, became the effort of old Dan and his companion; and, therefore, emerging from their coverts, they hurried slyly on, and creeping through the luxuriant underwood, soon attained a respectable distance upon the flank of the flying party; here stooping, and approaching his mouth to Warner's ear, old Dan whispered,

"Cool, cool!"

"Yes, yes, only let's attack them."

"Aye, I see you understand the matter; well now then, fire; you take the rearmost one—I'll take the next, but don't rush from cover, just dodge and load, and then have at the third, but on no account fire at the one with the young woman; now, master, a cool heart, steady hand and firm sight; take 'em right 'tween the eyes; that's *my* mark always: for you see its seen better than their red skins, which, for all the world, are just like dead leaves."

And Warner was cool, it seemed as if his heart was iron, so still its pulsations became.

As noisome as serpents they stole along, and hardly the cracking of a twig betrayed their progress. But their enemies were too much accustomed to the woods, and too watchful, longer to remain in ignorance of their pursuers' presence. The rearmost Indian suddenly stopped, peered anxiously around; and then gave vent to his suspicions in a low whistle, which brought another savage to his side. They were now in full range of their concealed foes, yet the fastidious taste of old Dan was not satisfied with their distance. The moment was one of great anxiety, as their discovery would totally prevent the plan of attack on which the only hope of success depended; they, therefore, crouched in silence among the neighboring brush, while a hurried consultation took place between the two Indians; after which the one who had last came up advanced a pace or two, and stood in an attitude of the deepest attention. What a moment of suspense was that. Discovery was utter ruin, and Warner shuddered as he thought of it. A second or two that seemed hours, flew by. The Indian came still nearer, stooped and peered anxiously into the very thicket where they lay. The old hunter gradually loosened his knife from its sheath, and Warner held his breath almost to suffocation. Another minute passed, and the Indian turned away satisfied, as he saw a serpent glide from the underwood. The two pursuers breathed freely again. The Indians were seen consulting once more, and then turned to follow their companions; when the old hunter stepping lightly along followed by Warner, gained a position

within rifle shot of their enemies. A treacherous twig cracked beneath their moccasins; the savages sprang back, saw their enemy, and uttering a loud yell prepared to fire; but just as they turned toward the thicket, old Dan stepped into the open space with the young lover, and coolly raising his long piece, glanced his eye along the barrel and gave the command to fire. The sharp sound of the rifles was heard ringing through the woods, and the two Indians springing up on high, fell dead upon the ground.

Carried away by the excitement of the moment, Warner, forgetful of himself, and thinking only of the rescue, sprang forward, and was rapidly rushing on, when he heard the loud voice of the old hunter crying out, "to covert, to covert," and hardly had he time to gain the shelter of a neighboring oak, before its splintered bark flew off before the deadly balls of the rifles of two other savages.

Seemingly satisfied with this act of aggression, the Indians retreated up the ascent, darting from tree to tree, and rapidly re-loading their empty rifles. With the same caution their pursuers followed, eagerly looking for an advantageous point of attack. A few rods had thus been passed over, in this wild manner of engagement, when the impatient Warner heard the clattering of hoofs, and beheld the remaining Indian at some distance ahead, urging on the horse that carried Bertha. The conviction instantly flashed across his mind that the two Indians were thus to divert their attention, while the other escaped with the prize.

Maddened at the very sight he called to his companion, and pointing to the Indian, urged him on, but the wily hunter, without raising his eyes from his foe, only answered.

"Aye, take off your red skin first."

"But Bertha, Bertha—quick!"

Glancing his eyes around at this passionate appeal, the old hunter only saw the advantage the other Indian was gaining upon Warner, and merely responded.

"Take off the Ingen thief."

"On! on! for God's sake on!" was the wild answer of the young lover, as he dashed ahead and met the opposing form of the nearest savage. It was but the work of an instant to rush in upon him and close in deadly conflict. Short, sharp and fearful was the trial of skill; but after a momentary struggle the sinews of the young man prevailed; the Indian fell down beneath him; and planting one knee upon his writhing form, Warner drove with his disengaged hand his hunting-knife deep into the breast of the prostrate foe; a gurgling sound ensued, a gasp, and the savage was but lifeless clay. Springing

up from his victim, the impetuous lover gave it one look of mingled pity and horror, and then hurried forward in pursuit of the flying savage. As he dashed onward with his clubbed rifle in his hand, he saw that the contest between old Dan and the other Indian was rapidly approaching its termination. In their eagerness they had approached within a few yards of each other, although so great was the skill of either combatant, that neither could get sight upon the other; at the moment, however, that the young lover sprang forward, the body of the hunter became too much exposed, the piece of his opponent was quick as lightning, and old Dan fell at the base of the tree.

Warner sickened at the sight; he was as yet unobserved by the victorious marksman, and though he felt the day was too surely lost, he determined to die like a lion at bay, and die if he must in the act of rescue. Stopping, therefore, not a moment in his course, but only grasping his piece more firmly in his hand, he sprang up the ascent with a velocity to which desperation lend treble wings. But it seemed as if swiftness and strength had been given to him only that he might view the consummation of despair; for when he rushed from the denser part of the forest upon the edge of the precipice, a sight met his vision that sent the blood back in volumes to his heart.

The overtaken savage, little thinking of the success of his party, and believing all hopes of carrying off his captive were destroyed, was dragging the struggling girl from her horse, at the distance of some rods ahead. One hand was rudely grasping her left arm, and endeavoring to tear her despairing clutch from the mane of the restive beast; while the other held the terrible tomahawk in readiness for the deadly blow. The head of the terrified girl was entirely uncovered, for her bonnet had fallen off, and the fair tresses escaping from their confinement, were now tossing wildly over her shoulders; while her pale face was turned up toward the sky. As the unequal contest continued, the restive beast gradually approached the edge of the cliff, so that each instant seemed to bring destruction nearer. A moment passed, and then the struggles of the girl became fainter and fainter, and the shrieks which at first, rose on the morning air, altogether ceased, though their echoes yet rung through the pathless woods.

A cry of wild horror burst from Warner at the sight. He swung up his heavy rifle, and strained every nerve to reach the spot. "Oh, God!—oh, God!" murmured before my sight," exclaimed he distractedly, as with almost superhuman speed he bounded along.

The savage saw him coming; felt that his own triumph was secure, and answered the horror-stricken cry with a wild laugh that rang through the woods, and lived for years after in the recollection of Warner; then, dropping his hold upon the maiden's arm, he grasped her hand, and quickly dragged her to the ground; while, with a taunting smile and exulting look, he called in broken English for her lover to come and save her.

And her lover came. He gave one last spring and then—oh! God of heaven—there was a yawning chasm between them which he had not seen till this moment. In the bitterness of his soul he could have cursed, but he only stood there trembling with fearful passion, while the wild laugh of the savage was heard again, as he said in bitter mockery.

"Is the white warrior a woman that he cannot leap?—see, he must come quick," and he passed his weapon around the head of the senseless girl, "did he not hear the cries of the little one?"

Warner spoke not, he tried to utter a wild defiance, but the words only gurgled in his choking throat, and flinging down his rifle he gnashed his teeth in passion, as he shook his arm madly at the foe. He breathed thick and hard. He felt the bitterness, the awful bitterness of his situation, and tearing his knife from the sheath he brandished it at the exulting savage. His answer was the same taunting laugh, and, as he stood there over the form of the prostrate maiden, he seemed some fiend from the world below, exulting in his triumph as he played with the agonies of his two victims. He stooped again, and then with more than consummate cruelty, putting aside the fair hair, and baring the marble brow, he cast one more mocking look upon the young lover, and raised his weapon till its bright edge gleamed in the morning sun. Hope, all hope was gone. A swimming sensation rushed through Warner's brow. He saw that glancing weapon swung into the air. For an instant it rose upward, and then—the sharp crack of a rifle was heard, and while the Indian chief flinging his arms wildly around, sprang from the edge of the precipice, and shot downward like an arrow from the skies, old Dan himself, whom Warner had left for dead, sprang forward exclaiming—

"The varmint, the varmint—I'll bet anything I took him 'tween the eyes," and then quickly changing his tone of exultation to one of concern, he added,

"But the young woman, I hope the heathen dog hain't killed her."

After much difficulty they succeeded in gaining the opposite rock by a circuitous path, and

immediately set about the recovery of the inanimate girl. This, at first, was a work of some difficulty, and when at last she did open her eyes, and look wildly around her, the first thing that met her gaze was the well known face of her lover bent earnestly upon her. But she did not recognize him. She shuddered and closed her eyes again, and some moments more elapsed before she showed signs of returning life. At last, however, she murmured out her lover's name, her lips moved incoherently for a while, and then she looked up again. A faint smile illumined her features as she recognized that well known face, and she whispered,

"Oh! I had such a fearful dream; there were dark savages in it; are they all gone?"

"Yes, dearest, and I am here, I—your own Frederick."

"Then am I safe?" murmured the half unconscious girl, burying her face on her lover's broad bosom.

As soon as Bertha was sufficiently recruited, they set out on their return, old Dan and Warner walking on either side of the horse and supporting her. The little cavalcade had not proceeded more than two miles when it met about twenty neighbors, armed and in hot pursuit on the trail, who, at sight of Bertha alive and unhurt, rent the air with cheers and crowding around her preservers, shook their hands with frantic joy.

When Judge Conway found his daughter restored to his arms, he could not refuse the suit of the lovers, especially when Bertha, casting herself on her father's bosom, told him she could never be happy without Warner. She and her lover were married that very winter, and old Dan was one of the most prominent spectators at the wedding.

It is but a few years since the old hunter died. He was accustomed to describe his rescue of Bertha in these words:

"When I fell at the foot of the tree it was all a trick. Seeing the Ingen about to pull his trigger, I dodged and tumbled headlong as if dead, on which the heathen varmint rushed on me. Then, I leapt up, knife in hand. But he was as spry as a young catamount; and had me around the middle in no time. At it we went, wrastle, wrastle, wrastle, now I under, now he. At one time I thought he would be too much for me, for sich an audacious savage I never seed before. But at last I got him fairly down and despatched him with his own knife, for my own had been broke in the scuffle. Then I jumped up, loaded, and ran after the squire, who I reached, as you may have heard, jist in time to save the life of his wife, that is! I

have seen many Ingen fights, and heern tell of more, but I never heard of, or saw sich a skrimmage as that, stranger!"

HEAVEN BLESS THE CAT!

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PROVOKING LITTLE CREATURE."

"ARE you going to Stepford, sir?" said a stranger, addressing Herbert Percy, at the steamboat landing at —.

If ever there was a person of fastidious tastes it was our hero, and at first he looked rather scornfully on the coarse, ill-attired speaker: but Herbert Percy was a gentleman, and, after a moment's hesitation, he answered blandly that he was going to the village named.

"Will you take charge of a young lady then, for me?" asked the stranger, as if unconscious of any freedom.

Herbert, though he smiled at the man's ignorance of etiquette, in thus addressing a perfect stranger, rather than the captain of the boat, on whom he might be supposed to have some claim, immediately assented, and the man left our hero at once, saying he would go and bring the young lady.

"This looks very like an adventure!" said Herbert to himself. While he is wondering to what it would lead, we will give the reader a little insight into his history.

Very peculiarly situated was Herbert Percy! Left an orphan at an early age, he would have been wholly destitute, but for the interposition of a gentleman, who, having once loved his mother in vain, had never married, and now thought himself happy in being permitted to take charge of her child. This charge, however, was not a personal one, for before Herbert was two years old, and before his parents had been dead a twelvemonth, his benefactor sailed for the East Indies, where he was extensively engaged in commerce, and whence he had fortunately come on a visit about the time that Herbert's parents died.

Our hero accordingly took his new guardian's name, and grew to be fifteen years old before he heard much of Mr. Percy. About that time, however, his benefactor wrote to America that he wished the boy to be transferred to an intimate friend of his, Mr. Reuben Gray, who was about to undertake in his behalf the charge of a large iron-works, that had been yielded up to Mr. Percy for a debt.

Mr. Gray, or rather Mr. Percy, for it was this gentleman himself in disguise, welcomed our hero to the Coralton Iron-Works with unfeigned delight; for in every feature of the child he saw what reminded him of his first, and only love. Herbert was accordingly brought up as the heir of Mr. Percy.

As soon as Mr. Percy had established himself at Coralton, he sent for his two orphan nieces, the children of his two deceased sisters. The eldest, Maria, was a lively, quick-tempered girl, but headstrong: she was very beautiful, however, in both face and figure. The youngest, Emma, was only a pretty child, scarcely in her thirteenth year: she was shy and timid, but studious, tender of heart, and with a sweet yielding temper. Strange to say, Mr. Gray, or rather Mr. Percy, loved the wilful Maria best; on the principle, we suppose, that parents often think most of the child which gives them the greatest trouble. He early formed the plan of uniting her to Herbert; though he confessed to himself that the young man's refinement of manner and mind would probably shrink from the boldness and frivolity of hers. He hoped, however, that time would improve his niece; and in order that this might be done, and that Herbert might not imbibe any early prejudices against her, he proposed, when the young man came from college nineteen, that he should visit Europe for two years.

As Herbert, however, was still ignorant of the identity between Mr. Gray and Mr. Percy, a letter from this latter gentleman was produced proposing the foreign tour. Herbert was only too glad to go. He was to write to his benefactor, under cover to Mr. Gray.

Herbert went through the same scenes, the same ordeal that other young men do who spend two years abroad, travelling from one place of interest to another. While abroad he wrote to Mr. Percy, directing his letters to Mr. Reuben Gray, always enclosing a much larger one to his benefactor in the East Indies, which letters, of course, as they were meant for him, were opened and read by Mr. Gray. He was pleased that the young man so justly appreciated him in his character of superintendent, and more pleased to find that Herbert complained of his coldness. "I feel as if I could give him my whole heart," said Herbert, in one of these letters, "but he repulses me, yet he is indulgent and kind. I wrote him to talk to me unreservedly, as you do, my dear father and benefactor; you meet all my wants, your words of affection cheer and animate me, but Mr. Gray, spite of the tenderness I have for him, and which he must see, never even shakes hands, or seems at all glad to see me after three months absence."

This was the truth. Mr. Percy did not dare give way to his feelings toward the son of the woman he had so fondly loved. But there was not a moment when the young man came near him that he did not long to fold him in his arms, for he was so like his mother, and his voice when

quite young resembled hers so exactly, that Mr. Percy feared his emotions would betray him.

Herbert came home much improved in appearance, and highly benefitted by the observations he had made abroad. It was on his way to Coralton, after he landed from the packet, that the request was made to him with which our story opens.

In a moment our hero found himself leading the young lady along the plank laid from the steamboat to the shore. She blushing, shy and timid: indeed Herbert saw she trembled at stepping on the plank. When on board the boat, he endeavored to open a conversation with her: but he could get no answers except "yes" or "no." However she was very pretty, very graceful and modest, and listened with attention to Herbert's conversation, which was principally of scenes abroad. Herbert was very sorry when the boat stopped at Stepford. He was going further on, and did not land: nor was this necessary, for a hackney coachman, whom the young lady said had been sent for her, was in waiting. The name on her small trunk was Brown—E. Brown!

Herbert went on to Coralton, where he was received with joy. But, after the first few days of exciting welcome were over, he began to feel dissatisfied. Why was it? He had never felt so before. The truth was, the modest face of that young girl haunted him. It was the very ideal which, in his boyish fancies, he had pictured for his future wife.

Perhaps Herbert thought all the more of the young girl, because he was continually contrasting her with Mr. Gray's niece, Maria, who was now twenty, and had grown even bolder, ruder and more boisterous. Of her cousin Emma he saw nothing, for she was at school, and when she came home once or twice at vacation, it was at periods when he was travelling. They spoke of her, even Mr. Gray himself, as still a mere school girl, and Herbert scarcely thought of her except when others named the poor child. In fact he was always thinking of the young girl he had met on board the steamboat.

"I am very tired of this idle life," said he, one day, to Mr. Gray, "it is not right that you should labor so incessantly. I owe Mr. Percy much: let me assist you."

It was some time before Mr. Gray could speak; but when he did, it was to reply that he had just received a letter from Mr. Percy, in which Herbert was requested to devote three years to the study of the law. At the same time he produced a letter in Mr. Percy's handwriting directed to Herbert, which, when opened, proved to contain the same request.

On his way to the city, Herbert could not resist the temptation of stopping at Stepford; but as it was quite a large town, he could obtain no clue to the young girl. He did not, our readers will recollect, even know the name of the persons she was visiting; Brown, too, was a very ordinary appellation: so, it was no wonder that his week's search was fruitless.

But this failure only made him think more of her: a result which all who have been in love know to be natural. Her sweet, modest face often came up provokingly between him and the page of the dry law book he was reading.

Our hero had been engaged at his studies about ten months, and was in his twenty-second year, when he was thunder-struck by receiving the following letter from Mr. Gray:—

"My Dear Son—

With painful feelings I sit down to break to you an incognita, begun without sufficient thought and maintained for years, but which has led to the most painful results. Know me at once, then, as Mr. Percy. The assumed name of Mr. Gray I adopted in order that I might learn you, if possible, to love me for myself. That I have succeeded, my dear boy, I am assured; but alas! while I have gained my desire, I have unconsciously ruined another's happiness. I feel that I must cut this painful story as short as possible. You have often met my niece at my house: it has long been my dearest wish to see you married to her. But as I did not wish to force your inclinations, I resolved to let things take their course. She is proud, very proud, and, as you know, beautiful: so I did not, for a moment, think of the possibility of her loving you unsought. Yesterday, however, by accident I learned that she had long secretly loved you—indeed ever since your return from Europe. The very thought that you may love another will, I am sure, make her unhappy. This is a terrible blow to me, for you and she, above all others, divide my heart between you. I might, perhaps, have endeavored to secure her happiness by making your union with her the contingency by which you would heir my estate; but, my dear boy, I would not be so unjust to you, whom I love as my own child, and whom I have reared in expectation of wealth. No, Herbert, I will leave you entirely free. I look on this unhappy affair as a punishment sent by Providence for my duplicity in concealing my name. Though it sends a poisoned dagger to my heart, I will bow and submit myself to the stroke.

I have thought it my duty, however, my dear son, to tell you of this secret passion; because, as love grows by daily companionship, it is better you should come no more to Coralton. Only, if you love no one else, and think you can wed this poor, dear girl, it would be the happiest day in my life when I saw her your wife.

HERBERT PERCY,
alias REUBEN GRAY."

Poor Herbert was almost stunned by this intelligence. Yet he thought, at first, comparatively

little of this strange transformation of Mr. Gray, whom he so deeply loved, into Mr. Percy, whom he had hoped yet to love. He thought only of the niece. He now saw a thousand things which he ought to have regarded as suspicious in Maria's conduct. But how could he marry her? True—she was beautiful, but in all things what a contrast to the young girl he secretly worshipped. Whenever he thought of that sweet, fair face—of that modest cheek blushing like a delicate rose—of those mild, almost saint-like, yet inexpressibly tender eyes, he turned with disgust from the vision of Maria's bold, impudent manner, and the tones of her loud, coarse voice. All this may seem very strange; but there have been such things as love at first sight; and Herbert was an example of it.

At once then he decided to write back to his benefactor that he loved another. But Herbert had only seen Miss Brown once, and would others credit the fervor of a passion entertained under such circumstances? Besides, on a second reading, the concluding paragraph of Mr. Percy's letter appealed to Herbert more forcibly than a command. In the hope, there half expressed, the whole heart of his benefactor was obviously bound up. The tone of the letter, too, was so generous: should he be less so? Ought the mere possibility that he might yet meet and win his mistress, and thus secure his own felicity, to be set off against the certainty that, by marrying Maria, he could make two persons happy? Herbert was not selfish, he was generous to a fault. He sat down, and wrote to Mr. Percy that, if his niece would accept him, with no heart to give, he would marry her at once.

But no sooner was the letter despatched than his feelings suffered a revulsion. He pictured himself as the husband of Maria, and then, in contrast to her, came up the memory of the young girl. He almost regretted he had sent the letter, and fearing his real wishes might be misinterpreted, he despatched a second letter, more explicit; but this one he directed to Maria instead of her uncle.

By the return mail came an answer from Mr. Percy. He wrote in tones of rapture. He had conferred with his niece; and together they had fixed that day week for the marriage, by which period Herbert was expected at Coralton.

Herbert could scarcely believe his eyes. After what he had written to Maria, for her to show such eagerness, nay! even to consent to have him at all, surprised him. Herbert actually hated her now. She was ten times ruder, coarser, and more bold than ever to his fancy; and the sweetness and modesty of her he had

lost, were a hundred times enhanced in consequence.

At first he could not believe but what there was some mistake. Every mail he looked for a letter from Maria to say that her uncle had written before she received Herbert's epistle; but none came; and, after waiting two days, more in disgust than ever at the partner fate was forcing on him, he wrote a short, cold note to Coralton stating that he would come down on the day fixed for the wedding.

"Live with her, I cannot," he thought, "but I will fulfil my word. I will marry her, as I have promised; but as soon as the ceremony is over, I will take leave of her forever. My poor benefactor, it may make him unhappy at first: but he will flatter himself that all will at last come right. Oh! how have my high hopes of married felicity ended."

Herbert took care not to reach Mr. Percy's mansion until nightfall. His benefactor met him at the door, embraced him with tears, and would have conducted him at once to his bride.

"No—no—not yet!" said Herbert, putting off the interview as long as possible, like a criminal about to be broken on the wheel. "I am dusty—my dress is disarranged—I will go to my room, and when all is ready, send for me."

"Very well, my son—it shall be as you say. God bless you! I am so happy!" and Mr. Percy, quite overcome, followed him with tearful eyes.

Herbert's heart sank when, an hour later, Mr. Percy knocked at the door and told him all was ready. His knees shook and he staggered as he rose, but making an effort he commanded himself, opened the door, and met his benefactor with a forced smile.

"You will go to your own house as soon as the ceremony is performed," whispered Mr. Percy—"it is all prepared for you. I have bought what was Squire Heaton's mansion—you know the place—this is a little surprise for you!"

At such kindness, Herbert felt his heart almost fail in the determination he had formed to desert his wife.

The bride rose from the sofa as they entered. Herbert gave one shuddering glance at her. She was richly dressed and wore a deep veil of white Brussels lace, which quite softened the boldness of her look. He turned toward the minister, who stood awaiting them, took passively the hand of the bride, and fronted the clergyman. In a minute he was married.

Then followed the congratulations, but from these Herbert shrank away, rudely turning his back on the bride, and conversing with the clergyman to avoid them. In five minutes he

found himself seated side by side with his wife in a carriage.

The ride passed in silence. The bride, at last, seemed to have lost her boldness: she sat in a corner of the carriage, with her face averted; she could not help but see how distasteful she was to her husband.

They reached their house. Herbert politely handed her into the parlor, first telling the coachman to wait for him. She staggered to a sofa; but he did not sympathize in the least with her apparent confusion and timidity, for he thought that any woman who could marry under such circumstances, was entitled to no consideration.

"Madam," said he, without circumlocution, for he had no fear of wounding her feelings, "you know my sentiments toward you too well to be surprised at the determination I am about to announce. We part on this instant and forever! You are utterly distasteful to me—the manner in which you consented to marry me is sufficient alone to account for this dislike. Still, I cannot help regretting that you forced me to marry you—when you might, some day, have married a man who could love you." With these words he turned away.

The poor bride, utterly confounded, had cast herself on the sofa, and as the door closed after Herbert she flung off her veil and burst into sobs, when suddenly a large animal that lay under the sofa, darted up and made a spring toward her.

Her nerves were previously weakened, and now she gave a terrible scream, for she thought it was a large panther. Herbert, hearing the scream, rushed into the room and just caught her in his arms as she was falling.

She roused instantly and pushed him away; but, as he kept asking the cause of her screams, she told him that there was a wild animal in the room, which had made a spring at her and might now fly at him.

"I am sorry you have been frightened," said he, for the first time perceiving the cause of her alarm, "it is only my large Maltese cat; he has been shut up all day and wanted to get out—do not tremble so, I assure you it is only a cat. I brought him with me from abroad, and, as my favorite, he has been sent here. Surely you know him. Hector, Hector, come out, you foolish fellow, come here to me."

The cat crawled out and came humbly toward his master, who lifted him up and brought him before the trembling girl. She gave one glance at the animal, and then, recollecting herself, held both hands to her face. She did not do it so quickly, however, as to prevent Herbert from looking at her; he opened the door, put the cat

out, and then in perfect amazement seated himself by the poor, confused young woman.

The face he just glanced at was certainly not that of Maria. A vague feeling came over him that it was a familiar face, but he could not recollect where he had seen it.

"You are no longer frightened, I trust," said he, venturing to draw one of her hands from her face, "sit down again!" in his amazement he scarcely knew what to say.

"Oh! no—no," said she, "I am no longer afraid. Go—forgive me for having detained you, but my nerves were so shattered that a very little matter frightens me now."

She tried to turn her head from him as she said this, and attempted to rise; but Herbert's mental vision was clearing; this indistinct view of her face had brought another face more vividly before him, and seizing both her hands he bent forward and looked in her eyes.

"You are the young girl that was put under my care on her way to Stepford," said he, "are you not?" If she trembled through fear of the animal, he trembled from other causes.

"I am," said she, "did you not know it?"

"Know it!" answered he, "no, I did not; you disappeared from my sight, and I have for three years been endeavoring to discover where you lived. This seems like a dream. But, dear girl, tell me if you are really the niece of Mr. Reuben Gray—Mr. Percy, I mean."

"Yes," said she, looking down.

"And you are the lady to whom I gave my unworthy hand this evening—to whom I spoke in this cold, heartless manner?"

"I am your wedded wife," said she, weeping bitterly. "It is impossible that you should not have known it. My uncle told me that you once had a partiality for me, and I hoped it might return. I did not know that you had such an aversion to me."

"Aversion! Good heavens! your image has never been absent from my mind since I first saw you. But before I allow hope to spring up in my heart tell me what all this means—why did Mr. Percy inform me in his last letter that Maria was in love with me?"

"Maria—what! cousin Maria? Don't you know she has been in Virginia these two months, and is engaged to a gentleman there? Surely uncle said nothing about *her*."

Herbert thought a moment, then remembered that no name had been mentioned in Mr. Percy's letter. He saw now why his epistle to Maria had not been answered.

"You are then my wife, Emma," said he, drawing her to his bosom, "and can I teach you to love me, for I call heaven to witness

that I have loved *you* from the first hour I sat by your side."

"I do not think you can teach me to love you better than I do," said she, turning her sweet, blushing face toward him, then hiding it on his bosom.

"Heaven bless that cat!" said poor Herbert, "had it not been for that jump of his, I should now, and perhaps forever, have been the most wretched of men. Dear girl, dear Emma, but more than all, my dear, lovely wife, tell me how you have learned to love me, for excepting that one short hour you have never seen me."

"Never seen you!—may I say, my dear Herbert—or what shall I call you to show how tenderly you are loved?"

Tears were falling fast from the eyes of the desolate young man, for now it appeared to him that he possessed the affections of all the world, and his heart was overflowing with love in return.

"Let me hear what you would like to call me, dearest girl," he said, "heap every tender epithet upon me; you cannot be too lavish, for never have I heard an endearing term—never has any one caressed me, or called me by a tender name."

The good, gentle girl did call him by all the sweetest names that lovers use, and he heard the little history of her early and constant love for him; she even traced it back to her first seeing him when she was a child, and he only fifteen years of age. Then in her innocent way she told him how eagerly she learned everything, how studious she had been, and how long she practised on the harp, piano, and guitar, that she might be nearly equal to those whose performances he so much admired when in Europe, and how she prized his letters, all of which her uncle gave her to read. She told him too how she recognized him on board the steamboat. She was then making a visit during a vacation, and as she was using a borrowed trunk, no wonder Herbert could never find a clue to her.

"And now, darling love, that you know my whole heart," she said in conclusion, "and how truly, how entirely it is your own, can you think of going from Coralton never to return?"

Ah, the smiling little gipsy, well she knew that the firm hill on which the mansion stood, could as easily be torn from its base as Herbert could be moved from her side.

How happy Mr. Percy was, the next day, when told the whole story, and how happy Emma and Herbert were in repeating it.

"And to think Herbert was afraid to look you in the face!" said Mr. Percy, folding her in his arms and kissing her forehead.

"Heaven bless that cat!" ejaculated the bridegroom.

THE MALE COQUETTE.

BY MISS LOUISE OLIVIA HUNTER.

CHAPTER V.

"I WONDER who he can be!" exclaimed Dora Lincoln, the only daughter of our village doctor, as she stood by the window gazing very attentively upon some passing object on the avenue before her. "Come hither, Virginia," she continued, turning eagerly to a young girl who was seated at a short distance from her, "come hither, and tell me if you do not think him very handsome."

Virginia Elmslie moved hastily forward, and in an instant stood beside her cousin, who pointed out the subject of her observation, a gentleman riding slowly past on horseback. He had now just turned the avenue and was in full view, and as he passed the gate of Sylvan Grove Cottage, Doctor Lincoln's lovely residence, his eye lingered upon the picturesque looking dwelling with a gaze of interest.

"Who *can* he be!" again exclaimed Dora, in a tone of earnest inquiry, "I have met him several times upon the avenue within the last two or three days, and he passes this way quite often. Very noble looking isn't he, Virginia?" But her companion made no reply, and surprised at her continued silence, Dora raised her eyes to her cousin's face. Virginia's cheek was strangely pale, and her bright lip quivered convulsively, while an expression of deep pain rested upon her countenance.

"Oh, Dora," she murmured in reply to that look of anxious inquiry, while she burst into tears—"oh! why did you call me to gaze on *him*? I had hoped that I was never to behold him more."

"Can it be possible! Was that Walter Livingston?" was Dora's exclamation in a voice of amazement: then perceiving her cousin's anguish at the mention of that name, she bent forward and tenderly kissing that troubled brow she added reprovingly—"dearest Virginia, have you forgotten your promise long ere this to cast *him* from your heart?"

"No, Dora," she replied, raising her head from her cousin's shoulder, "no. Deem not, dear cousin, that I love him yet—deem not that I still waste my affections on one to whom they are valueless. If Walter Livingston were to kneel this moment at my feet and beseech me to look upon him again with favor, I solemnly assure you that I would turn away with coldness and distrust. But I do not think I can ever behold him without emotion, for the memory of the past has for me a bitterness that will not soon pass away—and the sight of his countenance recalls the remembrance of all that he has caused me to suffer."

"There is one of whom I would fain speak to you, Virginia," said Dora, as half an hour after the two girls were seated together on the sofa, "do you not remember years ago when you used to visit us, a bright, merry-hearted boy, who was then the life of this household—even my brother Henry? Do you not recollect how he used to draw us over the snow in his little sled—and how envious I was because he used to pet you so, and call you his little wife? Well, Virginia, my light-hearted brother has since then been transformed into a man—a noble, generous, high-souled being, whose only failing is the earnest love he yet bears to a 'little wife,' who, in his sister's hearing at least, refuses even to allow him to cherish and protect her."

"Since Henry left us, Virginia, every letter has teemed with messages and inquiries concerning you, and only a few hours ago I received one, in which he informed me of his expectation of being with us very soon, when he intends to seek you and plead his cause in person. And you will not surely refuse the homage of a heart like his—oh, say, sweet cousin, that you will one day let me call you my sister."

"Alas! Dora," replied Virginia sadly, "I do not believe it will ever be in my power to accede to your wish. Bid your brother elsewhere seek a heart whose earliest hopes have not like mine been wrecked—for he is well deserving of

that rich wealth of love which I fear I can never again bestow."

And as she spoke, Virginia Elmslie turned hastily aside; but her words had not filled Dora's heart with despondency, for she murmured to herself in a low tone, "I shall not bid him do anything of the kind. Henry will soon return from college—and then let her withstand his pleadings if she can."

That night two persons might have been seen seated beneath an old and stately elm in Doctor Lincoln's garden—Dora Lincoln, and the one whom everybody asserted was her betrothed, Frank Murray, the only son of the wealthy lawyer of Lilydale. Sadder than usual were Dora's tones that evening, for she was relating to him a mournful tale—the history of her gentle cousin Virginia. She told him how deeply and truly that fair girl had loved one whom she had deemed all that was noble and good, and how when her affections were completely ensnared, she had discovered that she had been deceived in her estimate of his character, and that far from being what she imagined, he was a vain and heartless mortal, whom the world had designated as a male coquette. It was a long time ere Virginia Elmslie could be convinced of the truth of the reports that so often reached her—and not until she stood by the death bed of one whose love Walter Livingston had won and then slighted, could she credit the reality. But when she saw a young creature even fairer than herself laid low in death, and knew that the one she too loved had broken that trusting heart—an agonizing sensation stole over her spirit, and though for a few short days the star of hope lingered within her bosom, it was soon driven forth forever, and she found herself likewise forsaken and scorned.

The blow was more than a frame so fragile and delicate as Virginia's could support. A burning fever attacked her brain, and for many weeks her life was despaired of. But at length the fever left her, and she slowly regained her strength; yet even then she took not the slightest notice of what passed around her, but seemed to have sunk into a sort of stupor, from which it was a long while ere she could be fully aroused. After her entire recovery, her adopted parents (for Virginia was an orphan) deeming change of air and scene would be beneficial, sent her to visit her maternal uncle, Doctor Lincoln, in the beautiful village of Lilydale.

Long did Dora and Frank Murray hold converse—and two or three times after she had finished her sad narration, as she listened to the words that fell from her companion's lips, she shook her head saucily while a light, sweet

laugh rang out upon the air, for Murray was proposing a scheme which fully met her approval, and which she doubted not her power to accomplish. And indeed Dora was the very one above all others to place unlimited confidence in her own powers. Knowing so well the exact value of every smile that wreathed her coral lip, and of every glance of those dark, eloquent eyes of hers, it was not likely she could doubt her own ability to win a heart and cast it aside at pleasure—for though she had never tried her capacities in the latter field, it was what Frank Murray had now been planning, and to which Dora had lent a willing ear.

The day following, the allotted period of her absence having expired, Virginia Elmslie bade adieu to her uncle's family, and returned to her home in the far-distant metropolis.

CHAPTER II.

NEARLY three months had passed away since the period of Virginia Elmslie's visit to the Lincoln's, and strange reports began now to be circulated through the village. It was confidently whispered among the gossips of Lilydale, that the doctor's daughter was playing a coquette's part—that during the prolonged stay of Frank Murray at New York, where he had gone for the purpose of permanently establishing himself in business, she had looked with favor upon the attentions of another, a young stranger, by name Walter Livingston, who had come to Lilydale for the avowed purpose of proving its facilities as a fishing resort. It was furthermore asserted that this self-same Livingston belonged to a most aristocratic family in New York, and was a young gentleman of extensive property himself—while his attractive appearance and pleasing manners had long since gained him the good will of the people of Lilydale.

Sunday after Sunday Livingston was seen seated in Dr. Lincoln's pew at church, sharing the same book with Dora, and after the service escorting her home with the most assiduous politeness. And very often of a bright moonlight evening, when the doctor's family had retired to rest, the sweet tones of a flute were heard "discouraging most eloquent music" directly beneath the chamber window of fair Dora Lincoln. And doubtless the strains of that harmonious instrument fell gladly on the ear for which they were intended—for at such times a small white hand drew the snowy drapery of the window gently aside, and a slight form nestled among the folds of the curtain listening attentively to each note of melody.

From the first day Livingston had beheld Dora Lincoln she had claimed an interest in his heart.

He had little expected to find in a country village one so lovely and graceful as our young heroine. She had immediately struck his fancy as the very one above all others whom he would fain have chosen for a wife. His first thought was to obtain an introduction to the young lady—but how was this to be accomplished? A severe headache and nervous debility (whether real or pretended can only be guessed at) soon ensured for him the advice and attendance of the worthy doctor of Lilydale—and having thus made acquaintance with the father, it was no very difficult matter to get an introduction to the daughter. And indeed Doctor Lincoln himself seemed particularly anxious that the introduction should take place—why, I cannot pretend to say: but as the good old gentleman had ever eschewed all claims to being a match-maker, that he should now seem in a fair way to deserve the title, was, it must be confessed, rather singular.

If Dora's countenance had pleased Livingston, neither was he less charmed with her manners. Her sprightly conversation and lively wit, together with the rich accumulated stores of her mind, all tended to excite his highest admiration. Day by day the captivation of her society increased with tenfold power. Dora was not the only one to whom he had paid attention, as is well known to the reader, but never before had his heart been enlisted. For his own amusement he coquetted with others, little caring or heeding the anguish of which he was but too frequently the cause. If *they* were foolish enough to lose their hearts for him, he thought it was their own fault and not his—and thus like a butterfly he had flitted from flower to flower, sipping the sweets, and then turning coldly away. For the first time in his life Walter Livingston now loved, and love with him was not the mere passion of a day, but a feeling calculated to last through life. A few months before, the elegant and refined Livingston would have scorned the very idea of seeking a companion for life in an obscure village; but now he was completely enthralled, and would not have released himself if he could. He felt that if he were connected by marriage with Dr. Lincoln's family he should never have cause to be ashamed of his relations; for though they laid no claim whatever to being of the *bon ton*—as how could they living in the unpresuming village of Lilydale?—there was a certain air of respectability about them that would ever be a bar to any show of condescension on his part. The doctor's eldest son Henry had now returned home, and Livingston could not possibly object to him as a brother-in-law—for Henry was an intelligent, fine looking youth, and would be considered an acquisition even to

the circles of fashion. Yet Walter could not but be aware that in the demeanor of his brother-in-law elect toward him there was a restraint or rather a hauteur, that contrasted strangely with the apparent cordiality of the rest of the household. Why this was he in vain conjectured—but it annoyed him exceedingly for some time, though he at last came to the resolution of troubling himself no more upon the subject.

Very encouragingly had Dora Lincoln received the attentions of Livingston, and when she listened day after day to the tones of his voice, and met the eloquent glance of those eyes, she did not at all wonder that Virginia Elmslie should have suffered so much. Little did Dora imagine that she had made so deep an impression upon that selfish heart—she deemed that he had chosen her but as a new victim upon which to exercise his caprices—and thinking thus, she considered herself authorized in carrying out fully a certain plan of treatment for her suitor.

Week after week passed on, and still Livingston lingered at Lilydale. But one unlucky day a letter arrived from an uncle of his in New York, desiring his immediate presence in the city, to prepare for a journey to Charleston, for the purpose of attending the sale of property there owned by Walter, and which it seemed could now be disposed of to advantage.

It was with a heavy heart that an hour afterward, the young man found himself on his way toward Dr. Lincoln's, for the purpose of bidding adieu. Several times within the last week he had sought Dora for the purpose of making known to her his affection, but of late she had grown strangely cold, and each time that he was about to speak upon the subject, some slight remark of hers had cast a chill over his heart. Still he did not doubt that she loved him, but regarded her actions as proceeding merely from caprice: so now in a fit of pique he resolved to defer his proposal till his return from the south, and he had too high an opinion of himself to think that his lady love could forget him in the four months he proposed to be absent.

Dora and her father were sitting in the parlor—and as Livingston entered, the former rose and welcomed him with a smile. A few minutes were spent in conversation, and then the purport of his visit was told, and as the visitor spoke he glanced at the fair girl before him, as if wishing to read her feelings at the intelligence. But Dora's countenance was perfectly calm—no trace of emotion, not even the slightest appearance of a flush was perceptible upon her cheek. Livingston turned away astonished that she should manifest so little sorrow at his departure. But still he could not believe himself indifferent to her—and even then,

contrary to his determination, he would have avowed his attachment. But she allowed him no chance for private conversation, persisting in remaining close beside her father's chair—and he at length rose to say farewell.

And now he could not resist addressing a few words to Dora. "Would she allow him to send her a paper, or some other token to remind her of an absent friend?"

"Certainly—she was always willing to hear from her friends."

"Would she receive him as she had hitherto done, on his return? when he should hasten immediately to Sylvan Grove Cottage to pay his respects to its inmates." The latter part of the sentence was uttered in an emphatic tone, and the speaker glanced meaningly into Dora's face. This time a slight flush suffused her cheek, but it faded quickly away, and she replied that her acquaintances were always sure of a welcome.

"Well, Dora," remarked the doctor, after Livingston had left them, "I fear that your plans have entirely failed."

"Oh, no, indeed father," she replied in a tone of assurance, "fate could not possibly have been more favorable to my manœuvre. Livingston, I am certain, will return to Lilydale in four months—and in little more than that time you know—" She paused and blushed deeply. The doctor patted her cheek, whistled, "come haste to the wedding," and then left the room.

CHAPTER III.

ONE pleasant afternoon, precisely four months from the date of the above events, a carriage might have been seen driving at a rapid rate up the principal avenue of Lilydale. In a few moments it stopped before the door of the "Eagle Hotel," and a gentleman hastily alighted.

"Walter Livingston! how *do* you do?" ejaculated an individual who had previously been busy tying up some small packages, and as he spoke he jumped up and gave the stranger a most cordial shake of the hand.

"Ah, uncle Ben, how are you?" rejoined Walter Livingston, for it was no less a personage, "but what are you about?"

Uncle Ben was in his own estimation at least, a person of much consequence in Lilydale—for he was generally employed by the inhabitants to execute many little odd commissions, to which nobody else could find time to attend. He was an easy, good-natured sort of a fellow, whose principal failings were, as I have said before, a high opinion of his own importance, and a propensity to talk whenever he could find a listener.

"Why, you see, Mister Livingston," he said, elevating his head with a highly consequential

air, "they're goin' to have a great kick up at the doctor's next Thursday. Young Master Henry has taken a sudden notion to git married, and his father's a goin' to give a great weddin' frolic. They're to have grand times, I can tell you—*such* doings as aint never been seen this side of the disputed territory. But you asked what I was about—wait a minute and I'll tell you. You see, yesterday I was passin' the doctor's, and Mrs. Lincoln called me in and she says, says she, 'uncle Ben! we're in a bad fix just now, and don't know no way how to get out of it. There's our Dora, she haint got half enough note paper for invitations to the party, and if we don't have some more by to-morrow its all up with us—for we'll offend an almighty lot of folks if we don't invite everybody we know!' So secin' I might somehow be of use I offered to go to New York and buy the paper, as she said she had nobody to send for it; and she accepted my services and was right glad to get them too, for Mrs. Lincoln knows pretty well that she couldn't have a better hand than me to make a bargain. Well, bright and early this mornin' I set off for the city—and I've just been back ten minutes by the clock, and what I'm about is, a tying' the paper up in nice packages so that Miss Dora will like its looks—for them New York book-store keepers don't half know how to tie up anything."

With a smile at uncle Ben's loquacity, Livingston hurried into the hotel and proceeded to engage apartments. About half an hour afterward he was stationed in his room with a newspaper in his hand, when there was a loud knocking at the door, and the next instant uncle Ben entered.

"Mister Livingston, I could not help steppin' in just to tell you that you've come to Lilydale in the very nick of time," said he, bowing and scraping at the door, "I've been up to the cottage just this minute to take home the paper, and what should I hear but that Lawyer Murray's son, Master Frank, has taken it into his head to git married at the same time with Master Henry. So we're to have a double weddin', and as reg'lar a break down as ever was known. And such times as they're having at the doctor's to-day, and are likely to have for some days to come! *Such* meltin' of butter and gratin' up of nutmegs—*such* beatin' up of eggs and poundin' of sugar! Oh! it would do your heart good to see it. They're all as busy as bees. There's Mrs. Lincoln up to her eyes in dough—and Miss Dora—pretty creature, she looks so nice and tidy in her clean white apron—she's agoin' about the kitchen givin' orders about this and that and tother thing—and there's Nancy bustlin' around

lookin' as cross as a crab—and old Sally, the cook, a scoldin' at everybody like sixty. I happened to tell Miss Dora that you had come back again, and would you believe it, she clapped her hands and looked so delighted. And right away she called out to the doctor, who was in the sittin' room, and she says, 'there, father, didn't I tell you so? Mister Livingston *has* returned.' And her father smiled and said, 'Well, Dora, for *your* sake I'm glad of it.' I didn't know exactly what the doctor meant by that—but I might have *thought* something, if I hadn't *known* better."

This last sentence Livingston had not heeded—for his thoughts were upon Dora—bright Dora Lincoln! And that evening found him seated beside her at Sylvan Grove Cottage. She was listening attentively to the eloquent avowal that burst from the lips of her companion, and ere she had time to reply, a servant entered and handed her a letter which demanded an immediate perusal. Hastily she opened it and read, and when she had finished, apparently forgetting the presence of a third person, she leaned her head upon her hand and remained for a few seconds buried in deep thought.

"Dora," said Livingston, bending his eyes reproachfully upon her, "are the contents of your letter so very interesting that you have entirely forgotten *me*?"

"Pardon me," she replied, "but this letter is one for which I have been anxiously waiting. It is from my brother Henry, and announces his intended arrival on Wednesday from the city, where he has gone for the purpose of bringing hither his bride."

"And now, Dora," continued Livingston, pleadingly, "will you not listen to me once more? Will you not speak the words that will render me forever happy? Dearest Dora, do not keep me longer in suspense."

Dora, for a moment, was silent.

"Leave me now—you shall receive an answer to-morrow," was her reply, and she turned coldly away.

"Dora!" exclaimed her companion, seizing her hand and gazing beseechingly into her face, "dearest Dora, what means this chilling reserve? Have I done aught to offend you—or can it be that you care not for me?"

"It can be explained in a single sentence," was the reply, in the same tone as before, "my sweet cousin Virginia Elmslie is the affianced wife of my brother." And as she spoke, Dora Lincoln haughtily withdrew her hand from his grasp, and again turning from him, ere he had time to recover from the mortification and amazement her words produced, she had left the apartment.

The following morning, as Walter Livingston was sitting in his chamber at the Eagle Hotel, engaged in deep meditation, he was again interrupted by the appearance of uncle Ben with two notes tied with white satin ribands.

"There, Mister Livingston—didn't I tell you you'd come over to Lilydale just in the very nick of time!" he exclaimed, triumphantly placing them in the young man's hand, and then turning to depart again.

Livingston eagerly opened the notes. They were invitations to the wedding party at Dr. Lincoln's on the Thursday following—and the candidates who were then to present themselves at the hymenial altar were, Henry Lincoln and Virginia Elmslie—Frank Murray and Dora Lincoln. And as that last name caught his eye a sudden chill seemed to creep about the heart of Walter Livingston, and in another instant he sank senseless to the floor.

An illness of three weeks succeeded, during which his most devoted attendant was good uncle Ben, with whom he had always been a favorite. Yet more than once, as uncle Ben gazed upon the fever-flushed cheek of his patient, did he express his regret that "Mister Livingston" should have been prevented by sickness from attending "that reg'lar tarin' down weddin' frolic at the doctor's."

After his recovery, Livingston departed as quietly as possible from the village of Lilydale. And since then he has become a changed and repentant being. It is evident that he has made his last appearance in fashionable society as a **MALE COQUETTE**.

GOING A SLEIGHING.

BY C. J. PETERSON.

"Who would give a sou for a sleigh-ride unless he went like lightning? Give us blood horses, a frosty moonlight, and plenty of new laid snow, and we will whistle off fifteen miles an hour, making the old woods spin by us as if running from a real. Sleighing is a blessing rarely vouchsafed to us in these degenerate times, so when it comes throw care 'to the dogs,' and go whizzing over hill and dale—huzza!—like the wizard horseman, or a will of the wisp run wild."

Such were the cogitations of my friend Tom Hastings—you know Tom, don't you?—as he took his cigar from his mouth the other day. It was after dinner, and the snow had begun suddenly to descend, not swiftly however, but with a slow, lazy motion. He took a whiff, sighed and resumed.

"I'm afraid," he said, "it is not going to snow much after all. We never have a decent snow now-a-days, alas! And indeed the world is getting worse in every respect. The horses do not trot as they used to—we never see a good hearty, hot supper as we used to—and as for getting up the old fashioned sleighing parties, when one scoured half a county and picked up a pretty girl at every farm-house—why! we verily believe, one might as well attempt to raise the dead, or change an old bachelor into anything but the heart-dried mummy he always is. Even we can recollect the time when folks went sleighing with a dozen vehicles in company, and when songs, soft whispers and merry laughter were as plenty as blushes at 'sweet sixteen.' But now-a-days even the young fellows are not worth a maravedi! Instead of loving the bold, manly, open-air exercise of their fathers—whirling along with their sweet-hearts in the frosty moonlight, making the dear angels' eyes dance, and their cheeks tingle with the invigorating breeze—they mope, and flirt, and play the fop in some crowded ball-room, dressed out like dancing masters, and shivering at a draught of cold air as if in an aque fit. We do not wonder that small men are in the majority, and blooming cheeks a miracle with the girls. In Paris, they say, every family dies out in a century, merely from want of fresh air and exercise; and if continual importations were not being made from the provinces, the city population would finally become extinct. We do not think it strange. This living in close rooms, with a stove at ninety-one, makes roasted chesnuts of a man." We nodded in approval, and Tom, now fairly warmed, went on.

"Even courting, in these days, is sadly deteriorated, and has got to be a very mathematical affair, managed in parlors and ball-rooms, instead of at sleighing parties as in the good old times. People, who pretend to know, assert that one's courting days are the happiest period of life; and though we cannot assent to this, from our own experience; we are ready to protest against allowing any deterioration to creep into such a very pleasant article; and, therefore, go for sleighing, heart and soul, hammer and tongs! What is half so delightful as whistling along in a starlit sleigh, with the one you love sitting beside you, and her dear voice keeping up a delicious under tone to the merry jingling of bells, and the rapid tread of your horse on the hard, frozen track?

"In our young days we saw a good deal of this in sleighing times. We were cursed with a great many handsome fellows for acquaintance, who were disposed to be lady-killers, and rather too fond of flirting. But they all got caught at last. And the prince of the party—the Count d'Orsay of his set—met his fate at a sleighing party, the *ultima thule* of old bachelorism. Ah! that is a story for you, would you like to hear it? Though, faith! I've a great mind not to tell you, lest you should steal it for the next number of your magazine."

We made all sorts of promises. Whether we kept them or not, we do not say; for here follows Tom's story!

It was on a fine, bracing moonlight evening that Colonel T—— stopped, with a hallo, at our hotel in —— county, and told us to turn out for a sleigh ride. His own equipage was what a flat-boat man would call a "screamer." He had six horses harnessed to an enormous sleigh, which was already half full of girls and beaux; and, as for the bells, their name was legion. At every movement of his spirited animals, as they stood champing the bit at our door, a gush of wild music went ringing up, that made the blood dance in our veins.

We were soon equipped. I tumbled into the sleigh, almost into the laps of two prett girls, between whom I was to sit in a space about five inches wide; but Harry Stanhope leaping into his own light equipage, and cracking his whip led the way, though not before I heard the colonel whisper to him.

"I have a splendid partner for you—a beautiful creature, and full of spirits. She is my wife's cousin, just come from town. I advise you, too, to win her if you can, for she is worth a cool sixty thousand."

Away we went, hallooing over the wild hills

of that half settled district, and stopping at every farm-house for warm coffee and punch, until we drew up, with a smoking team, at the colonel's door. Our *cortege*, by this time, numbered a dozen sleighs.

I saw Harry start when the colonel led forth his cousin, for she was indeed all, and even more, than he had said. Just eighteen, with a most roguish eye; rich, red, pouting lips; an arm and hand turned like a statue's; and a shape, light and graceful as a young gazelle's; she was the very creature to fall in love with, even if a man had sworn to be an anchorite. Harry's eye kindled and his cheek glowed with pleasure as he handed her into his sleigh, and dashed off, again in the advance, as if a pack of wolves was in pursuit. Away—away we went, up hill and down dale, our spirits rising with our speed. Now and then we would meet a single sledge, or a gay party of them going in an opposite direction:—it was but a joyous hurrah, a crack of the whip, and we shot past, like arrows, each speeding on its way. Yet still Harry led the advance. We could see his light sleigh, half smothered in buffaloes, keeping its rapid flight ahead—here lost over the hill-top, there re-appearing in the valley—with now and then a gush of rich, ringing laughter sweeping toward us, and the plume of his fair partner streaming out like a white banner on the wind.

We drew up, at last, at the place where we were to take supper—a hot, smoking, substantial supper—and the girls could scarcely keep their feet still from the moment they heard the old black fiddler give the first preparatory scrape on his violin. Harry led out Miss Melville. They were, with all odds, the most beautiful couple in the room. The exercise had given the lady a rich color, and she really looked ravishingly beautiful. Harry, I have forgot to say, had a fine person, was grace itself, and a most accomplished man for general society. He and Kate rattled away, like two fencing masters; it was quite a struggle of wits between them. Both were flushed with the excitement; both were obviously highly pleased; and before the party broke up, I began to think both were a little in love.

The flirtation—for such it really was after that evening—wore a more serious aspect daily. Harry was always at the colonel's. Kate, though a beauty and heiress, made no effort to conceal her preference. I had no doubt she was seriously in love, and I honored the nobleness of her nature which scorned the coquetry too common on such occasions. She believed Harry sought her affections: his attentions certainly had been most marked; and she met the silent, but eloquent

language of his lover-like manner, with all the blushing and beautiful frankness of a true woman's nature.

Harry, with his eminent advantages, was not so vain as many men with half his pretensions are; but still he *was* vain. It was the one blemish in his character. It made him sometimes guilty of positive folly.

The affair had now been of some weeks duration, when, one morning, I ventured to quiz Harry on his success.

"When must I send to town for white favors and cards?" I laughingly asked. "For, I suppose, I will be groomsman."

"Pshaw! You are like all the rest," retorted Harry. "Can't one flirt with a pretty girl, without his being set down for a Benedict in perspective? Kate and I admire each other well enough; but—but," and he stroked his whiskers, "I've no idea of marrying so young."

I was really angry at the conceited puppyism of the fellow, and ashamed of him as a friend.

"You don't mean to say," I retorted, "that you have been *only* flirting with Kate."

"What else could I mean, my dear fellow?" he said, trying to laugh it off.

"Let me tell you," I said warmly, "that Kate is too fine a girl to be trifled with: though to trifle with any woman is very petty work for a gentleman."

He colored, but rallied and said, with another laugh, good humoredly,

"You always were a plain spoken friend, and its no use getting angry with you. But I haven't monopolized all Kate's time. I did not take her out with me on our sleighing party last night."

"I know it: and that is why I make free to speak to you about her. She had expected it—nay! believed, I have no doubt, that she had a right to expect it—and when you passed her by, she was, for a moment, thunder-struck. I could read in the momentary expression of her face a keen sense of neglect and offended pride, as well as the anguish, as I thought, of rejected love. Now, Harry, we have been friends from boyhood; but if you play the fool with that sweet girl, I shall despise you forever. No one, I am confident, read her emotions but myself, for she rallied instantly, and for the rest of the evening was the gayest of the gay. She was the partner of young Maxwell from the city—a man, by the bye, I should not like to have for a rival."

I threw this out to see if Harry winced under it; but he was on his guard, his keen eyes endeavoring to read my very soul. He must have suspected my motive, for he answered gaily, as he rose and went to the mirror to arrange his

whiskers. Perhaps this movement, however, was intended as much to conceal his face as otherwise when he spoke.

"So you think the dear creature is in love with me," he said. "And—faith!—I am half inclined to have her too. She is certainly a most bewitching girl; and, as you say, its scarcely fair to trifle with her. The fact is," and now he turned and faced me, "the fact is, I have carried this flirtation a little too far, unless I intend to marry Kate. But really one can't help making love a-sleighing. How can flesh and blood resist it, when one sits so cozily by the side of his partner that he can feel her breath on his cheek, and hear the lowest whisper of her trembling voice. Then, too, you must both be under one buffalo—and your feet will nestle together—and your hand strays naturally to take hers—and, by and bye, even your lips get somehow close to the sweet ones beside you, and you catch yourself kissing the struggling beauty before you are aware of it. There's many a sweet little dear loses her heart at such times. If I was an old rich hunk, and didn't wish my daughter to get married, whenever a gay gallant asked her to a sleigh-ride I'd take the impudent scoundrel by the collar, and—battery or no battery!—came him within an inch of his life. One can't resist courting in a sleigh; I ought not to have said as much to Kate, perhaps; and it was not fair to play her such a trick last night. But I'll make it all up this evening, even if I have to pop the question."

"I hope she may cut you dead," I said, piqued at his affected puppyism, "for you richly deserve it. You are head over ears in love, though you try to conceal it from me by talking like a conceited fop. It would serve you right if Kate, cured of her incipient passion by your last night's conduct, should marry this young Maxwell, who is a noble fellow, and one of the first matches in the country."

Harry made no reply; but he smiled, raised his eye-brows, and stroked his whiskers expressively—the puppy!

When evening came we met again at the colonel's. Young Maxwell was there, all devotion to Kate. A whisper from the colonel's wife informed me that he was an old lover of her cousin's, whom he had followed from the city, where their engagement was a common report. I glanced at Kate; she was in high spirits; and I began to wonder if I had not been wrong in thinking she admired Harry.

Harry colored, for he had heard what had been said also; but immediately after I saw him approach Kate, and with a low bow address her.

"Shall I hand you to the sleigh?" he said. Kate looked up with a half start.

"Sir!" she said.

Harry repeated his question, but with considerably less assurance.

"Shall I have the pleasure of your company in my sleigh?" he said.

Kate, for a moment, looked him through and through with her dark eyes: and beneath that look Harry's assurance fell inch by inch. At last she said with quiet dignity.

"No, sir. I am engaged to Mr. Maxwell!" And she turned to her companion and continued her conversation.

Harry became pale and bit his lips; the rebuff took him so completely by surprise. He was mortified, he was angry. An indignant repulse would have soothed his vanity; but this quiet, indifferent conduct stung him to the soul. He controlled himself, however; and I soon saw him chatting with a very pretty girl, who, I found, was to be his partner.

When we came to move off in our sleighs, I saw, by Harry's movements, that he was determined to mortify Kate if possible by distancing her partner. A bantering challenge, which Mr. Maxwell could not refuse, had already passed between the young men. The rest of the party, it was understood, were to move ahead.

"We will follow on," said Harry. "Only give us a clear road when we come."

Harry had a thorough bred, with a tremendous stride; and had long maintained the supremacy on the road. Young Maxwell drove a horse he had brought from town—a great, clumsy black animal—but with immense breadth of chest and vast muscles. I could comprehend a part of Harry's feelings. Burning for revenge on Kate, he had challenged young Maxwell, believing he should beat him with ease.

We had been about ten minutes on the road when there was a hurrah, and looking back along the moonlit highway, we saw the two sleighs coming like the wind. There is nothing more stirring than such a sight. The long, rapid swing of the horses—the buffaloes streaming behind—the swift whirl of the runners on the frozen snow—and the cries of the charioteers make the blood dance in our veins as when we hear a battle trumpet. The race was gallantly contested. We had hardly seen the two sleighs coming over the hill, before they were close on to us, the horses neck and neck and going at an awful pace. Both drivers sat back, holding in with might and main.

"Maxwell's ahead!" shouted one of our party.

"No—Harry has him," said another. "See, he dashes by."

On they came, diverging a little to the right

and left, so as to pass one on either side of our cortege. Harry's horse, carrying his neck and head slightly curved downward, was going at a speed even he had never shown before. Just as he passed us he darted ahead and took the lead. A glance from my friend, as he shot by, told of anticipated triumph.

But Maxwell pressed close behind. His gigantic black was flinging himself from side to side, heavy and unwieldy, but with miraculous strides; and was not half so much worried as his rival. He too went past like lightning. We followed their course with intense interest. By the time they had passed our cortege, Harry was several lengths ahead; but the black was obviously gaining on him, and there was a stretch of rising ground before. We followed at the top of our speed, anxious to keep them in sight. At length we saw the black lap Harry's bay—then Maxwell drew ahead:—and now followed a tremendous struggle, which was terminated by the victory of the black. From that moment the game was up with Harry. Maxwell continued to gain on his rival, and when finally we lost sight of them in the distance, he was speeding far before, like an arrow passing a bird in flight.

Never was a man more crest-fallen than Harry. Everybody now began to have an inkling of what was going on, and when we stopped at the rendezvous and learned that Maxwell got in at least five minutes ahead, there was any number of good-natured friends to condole at his misfortune in being distanced by Maxwell, and the speakers always took care Harry should understand that the phrase had a double meaning.

From that hour Harry's assurance left him. He avoided my eye that evening, and every thing approaching to a *tete-a-tete* thereafter. Thus things went on for a week. He flirted meanwhile desperately with his new partner, a gay, giddy girl who met him half way. But nothing made any impression on Kate. She did not seem to notice him at all, but kept up a quiet intimacy with Maxwell, never avoiding Harry, however, but yet rarely showing him the least encouragement. Whenever he sought her hand for a dance or otherwise, she was engaged to Mr. Maxwell, or some other gentleman.

At last Harry came to me. He was completely changed: all his assurance had left him; even his pride was broken down, or he never would have consulted any one.

"I can't stand it any longer," he said. "I love that girl to madness. But I am rightly punished—puppy that I was. Do you think," he said, suddenly and earnestly, "that she loves Maxwell?"

"I don't know," I said. "She likes him

evidently, but I'll venture to say he has never dared to take any of the freedoms you spoke of so boastingly, the other day, even while sleighing."

"Oh! forget my impertinence, I wish I could forget it myself. I spoke like a braggart and fool. Miss Melville is all purity and modesty, and would awe presumption down by a look. But do you think she really loves Maxwell?"

"Indeed I cannot tell," I said seriously. "But, at any rate, you are not going the right way to work to make your peace with Kate."

He was completely humbled; he asked, in evident distress, what he should do.

"I speak from what Colonel T—— told me," I replied, "and he only repeats his wife's opinion. Mrs. T—— says that Kate is too right minded as a woman to listen to you, even if she loved, so long as you strove to pique her by flirting with other women."

"Did Miss Melville say anything?" said Harry eagerly.

"Not that I heard. She has never breathed a word about this matter to her cousin; and Mrs. T—— is as ignorant as you or I, whether Kate loves Maxwell or not. There is one thing in your favor, however:—he sees infinitely less of her than he wishes. Now Kate, though she may treat the man she loves coldly if he has offended her, is of a nature too pure-hearted and noble to encourage a man she will not marry."

A gleam of satisfaction shot over Harry's face.

"You are right," he said, "and I have been a fool. My pride and mortification has been my curse. I will go and humble myself before her. I will be hers only. I will prove to her I am not the puppy she thinks me. If I cannot lay my heart where I desire to, I will not play the hypocrite and pretend to offer it at shrines which I despise. Oh! why could I not see this before? But I have thought all women coquettes—shame on me for slandering them. The purity of a soul like Kate's has been above my comprehension."

"Now you speak like a man, Harry," I cried, clasping his hand. "Hitherto I have been ashamed of you, for vanity and foppishness have come near spoiling a fine nature. Go—succeed! If you do as you promise, and Kate loves you, she will not hold out long. But you must prove to her that you have changed, or she will perseveringly root out every bit of love from her heart. She is a girl of a thousand."

And Harry was a changed man. Never was adoration paid more humbly, more reverentially than he now paid it to Kate. The heart must

have been unforgiving, or already monopolized, that could have stood out against such a suitor. Her slightest wish was anticipated; he was content merely to listen to her at a distance; and when he now solicited her hand for a dance it was with the deference of a knight of chivalry.

One evening they were standing by a window alone. The dance had just closed, but Kate was still at his side. Mechanically, as it seemed, he had led her thither, and Kate relenting had followed. There was such a humble, reverential manner about him that she looked up with her eyes full of tenderness and comfort. Oh! how that look thrilled to Harry's soul.

"Kate!" he said: and stopped. His heart beat violently: he scarcely dared proceed; for his words, he knew, would banish him forever, or bless him incalculably.

She looked up again at her lover, and her glance gave him hope to proceed.

"Kate," he said, "will you go in my sleigh to-morrow night? I have not asked you since, since—you know when, Kate—but oh! how I have suffered for my insolent assurance."

She put her hand frankly in his, and once more the glance of those eyes thrilled his soul, for love and pardon were melting from their dark depths.

"I will go with you, Harry," she said. Her further words, if indeed she had any to say, were checked by the animated pressure of her hand; and by Harry murmuring, in the rapturous tones of passion, all his affection, *all* his folly and its punishment.

"There—there, that is enough," said Kate, archly, at last. "Since you insist on it I will own I love you—have long done so—and now I hope, you will admit that all women do not fall, like ripe peaches, into men's mouths—I think that was the phrase, Mr. Vanity, you once employed."

"Forgive and forget my folly, for I am a changed man."

"I believe it," said Kate seriously, "or I should have ceased to love. Credit me, a coquette, or a male flirt are moral deformities. But I must not preach a sermon—see, they are beginning a new dance—shall I ask you, or must you ask me?"

In the dear confidence of that moment Harry felt as if it would have been bliss to have clasped Kate to his arms. Before I went to sleep that night, he had told me of his success and received my congratulations.

Kate proved all that he had fancied her. A warm and loving heart—gay and happy spirits—and beauty above the common order, these made his wife a blessing indeed to Harry. They

are still, after many years of married life, the happiest couple of my acquaintance.

THE MOTHER'S BABE.

BY J. H. DANA.

It was the baptism of the first-born!

Far in the wilderness, in a lone log-hut, were gathered the family, prepared for the solemn rite.

The father, bold and sturdy, stood in advance of the group; the mother, proud and happy, carrying the smiling infant, her first-born, in her arms, pressed after him; and a gray haired, patriarchal minister of God was in the act of raising his hands in prayer, preparatory to the baptism.

It was during the old French war. Braddock had been defeated, and the victorious savages were pouring down on the frontier settlements. But as yet neither the overthrow of the British general, nor the coming massacres by the Indians were known; and all was quiet and peace in that little frontier clearing, and, as its possessors fancied, for hundreds of miles around.

Suddenly a shrill, unearthly cry rent the air, seeming to fill the cabin and the atmosphere without, like some demoniac shout. Quick and startling came that yell, bursting on the silence like a thunder-clap in summer. The old minister dropt his hands; the mother became ghastly pale and looked around in wild affright. But the father, starting as a deer that hears the hunter's cry, sprang toward the chimney-piece, seized his gun, and with a single bound gained the door, which he flung open.

Too well had each one there divined that cry. They knew it to be the war-whoop of the savage: its tremendous volume assured them of the vast numbers of the foe.

If any doubt remained it was dissipated by the sight rendered visible when the door was flung open. The house stood in the centre of a clearing, about a furlong from the forest, which encircled it on every side. This vacant space was now filled with dark savages in their war-paint running toward the cabin.

"Bar the door—bar the door," exclaimed the

minister, rushing toward the opening, while, with his feeble hands, he seized the huge wooden beam used to fasten it on the inside.

"Ay! and barricade too," said the father and husband, with that stern eagerness which showed both how well he comprehended their perils, and how resolutely he was prepared to face them. And, accompanying the words with action, he soon, with the assistance of the minister, blockaded the door on the inside with tables, chairs, and other heavy articles. This being done, he paused a moment, and glancing rapidly around the room to see if anything else could be done, his eye fell on his wife and child:

By the sudden change which passed over his countenance—the transition from the look of conscious strength and defiance to that of love, pity, and agony all combined—it was evident that, in the excitement of the few preceding moments, he had quite forgotten the presence of those two dear beings.

For dear they were to him inexpressibly. Oh! how are the rich mistaken, when they weep over fashionable tales of love, if they fancy that the poor know nothing of affection. Hearts beat under russet cloth as well as under silk or velvet. A wife, a child is often all the treasure a poor man possesses. John Harding, the frontier farmer of our story, was one of these: he had none of this world's goods except the wild clearing and his gun; but he had a bosom that throbbed with the most devoted affection for his wife and child.

Yes! for that wife was the love of years. She had been of prouder blood than his own, a family once rich but now decayed, and her parents and brothers, had long resisted her marriage to an almost penniless man. But the lovers had at last triumphed, and the young wife, without a complaint, nay! with her blue eyes beaming on the contrary with love, had left her friends and followed her husband to his frontier home on the very borders of the civilized world. Here, after a sojourn of five years, a child had been born to them. Long desired had been that little stranger, and when

it came, the hearts of the parents were in a flutter of joy. The infant had grown to the age of nearly a year, and was becoming more interesting daily, when an itinerant minister of God, one of those patriarchs who may still be found in our frontier settlements, blessing and doing good wherever they go, came along, and now, for the first time, the mother's heart could be gratified by having the long desired rite of baptism bestowed on her child.

When Harding's eye fell on his wife she had sunk into a chair, hopeless, agonizing, every faculty apparently paralyzed. The infant was gazing up into her face with its great blue eyes as if in inquiry and astonishment. The group, thus made visible to the husband and father, recalled the remembrance of his early love, and all the still sweeter memories of married life: then, by a sudden flash of thought, that wife and child, so dearly cherished, rose before his mind's eye, mangled and bleeding under the tomahawk of the savage. It was this reflection, vividly presented, which had changed his look from that of high energy and defiance to utter agony and despair.

But now that patriarchal man of God advanced. He had seen the transition in Harding's demeanor and guessed at once the cause. He laid his hand on the husband and gently shook him.

"Rouse yourself," he said, "Faith worketh wonders. The God of battles will surely be on the side of innocence and youth."

As he spoke he glanced at the young mother, whose eye kindled at the words with sudden hope. Harding saw it. He too was a changed man. Grasping the old man's hand, while the tears dried in his eye, he said,

"You are right: in God let us trust. Mary, we will save you and the child, or all die together. Ha! they are on us."

These words were called forth by a yell of anger which the savages sent up, on having reached the house, to find it securely barricaded against them.

Immediately blows were heard on the door, followed by deafening yells. Harding examined the priming of his gun, ready to fire on the falling in of the first panel. At last with a crash one of them gave way. The farmer stooped, levelled his piece, and pulled the trigger. The sound of a heavy body was heard falling against the door, and then a tremendous yell of agony and vengeance broke from the crowd outside. After this all was still.

"The villains have got enough for the present," said Harding; as he coolly reloaded the piece.

His words proved true, for during full five minutes nothing was heard from the savages. The silence of that suspense was death-like. There was no opening except that of the shattered panel through which to reconnoitre the enemy, and here no signs of the foe were visible, so the little group stood motionless and waiting, breathless with anxiety. Harding was by the door, the minister beside him: the mother stood apart, striving to quiet the child, which had been frightened by the firing.

Suddenly she shrieked, and Harding turning around saw a dark form emerging from the chimney. In another instant, a second savage, descending from the roof in the same way, dashed into the room. Though paralyzed for a moment, Harding fired almost immediately and one of the savages fell, but the other sprang on him, and a third dropping noiselessly but swiftly into the room engaged the minister in combat, while a fourth, appearing in the same way, hastened to unbar the door.

The room was now filled with the terrible war-whoop, which was replied to by the savages outside, and, in an instant, the door yielding to the combined efforts without and within, the apartment was filled with foes.

In that moment, true to a mother's instinct, Mrs. Harding thought only of her babe. Even before the door gave way she had retreated into a corner behind the bed, where she stood partially screened from sight. Pressing her infant to her bosom and engaged in hushing its cries, she saw, for some seconds, nothing of the terrible conflict going on so nigh.

Ay! it was terrible. The minister, weak and unused to personal strife, was soon flung bleeding and stunned on the floor, when his assailant, seeing his companion hard pressed, hurried to his help. Harding, thus beset by two, fought like a noble stag at bay. Seizing the large hatchet, which fortunately lay on the hearth with a pile of wood, he retreated into a corner and prepared to make good his defence; but before doing so he glanced around the room, and seeing his wife safely concealed for the present, he began the fight, dealing a single blow with his heavy weapon that felled one of his assailants like an ox. The other then drew warily off.

But by this time the room was filling with savages, who, hesitating but a moment, made a second rush on Harding.

It was at this instant the wife thought, for the first time, of her husband. She glanced wildly around, and though the intervening savages almost hid him from sight, she distinguished his tall form raging above the fight. Spell-bound

she gazed! Her babe now lay lushed, because terror-struck on her bosom: while, with parted lips and eyes straining in agony, she watched the fearful conflict. To and fro, flashing meteor-like, she saw the huge axe of her husband fly, and wherever it struck, an enemy went headlong to the earth. So rapid were its motions that even the nimblest of the foes failed to break the charmed circle which Harding kept around him. Yet, for a while, the dense crowds pouring into the room and pressing toward the scene of the fight, actually forced their comrades forward in a body on the weapon of Harding, so that those in the foremost rank had no resort but to engage this terrible foe, nor could they do it otherwise than with their tomahawks, for the crowded space did not allow them to use fire arms. At last, however, the carnage was so terrible beneath that terrific weapon wielded by Harding's sturdy arm, that, by a violent, convulsive effort, the foremost savages forced back their comrades and stood at a safe distance, regarding their foe, like dogs before they rush in again on the board.

All this had not occupied a minute. Yet to the wife and mother it seemed an age. Every hope hung on that single defender—and he was her husband! Can feeble words depict her agony?

It was but a moment the savages stood irresolute. One of them, levelled his gun, and was in the act of pulling the trigger, when Harding, whose keen eye, sharpened by peril, seemed to take in every motion of his foes at once, darted forward and with a blow of his axe, laid the Indian a mangled mass at the feet of his companions. The next instant, the borderer had regained his place and stood once more on the defensive.

This terribly bold act appeared to paralyze the foe for the third time. They looked at each other, and shrank instinctively back further from Harding. But, at this instant, a shrill, re-animating cry rose from the outer edge of the crowd, and a tomahawk, hurled with unerring aim, would have transfixed the defender, but that he saw it coming and dodged the blow. The steel grazed his hair and sank into the log behind, where it stuck, its handle quivering violently.

At that whoop, accompanied by that onset, the savages appeared to cast off the awe in which the prowess of a single man had enchained them, and remembering their numbers, made a third onset on Harding, not this time only with hatches and knives, but with fire arms.

Wounded, hard-pressed, and weak from loss of blood, Harding could be seen for some minutes longer, by his agonized wife, fighting

with superhuman vigor and desperation. Her very breath hung suspended as the conflict progressed. Now she hoped, for she saw his tall form soaring pre-eminent: now she despaired, for he was dashed down by the tide of foes surging fierce and high over him. But again he reappeared: he had only sunk to his knee; and now he raged again the master spirit of the fight. At last his proud front was bowed once more. There was a terrible crash of crossing weapons, a violent convulsion in the crowd of assailants, who fell back, but instantly advanced again. Then followed a breathless hush, succeeded all at once by a simultaneous yell of the savages. The wife knew that all was over.

She had been held motionless by the spectacle of that terrific struggle—motionless as if paralyzed by some enchanter's spell. She had thought of neither child nor husband definitely. Only a vague sense of horror had possessed her, a breathless suspense! But now she again remembered her child. To save it was her instinctive impulse.

The savages were tumbled, pell-mell, on top of their victim, who, though prostrate, still appeared to struggle desperately. The door stood open, and no one interposed between her and flight, for all were occupied, either as participants, or spectators of the combat. She dashed toward the opening.

But she had miscalculated her foe. Noiseless as was her step, it arrested the ear of one of the savages, who turning quickly, seized her just as she reached the door, and snatching the infant from her arms, as if he divined instinctively in what way to torture her most, he brandished his tomahawk above its little head to strike.

All her preceding suffering had been nothing to those the mother experienced at that moment. Her babe, her first-born, her only one—murdered—and before her eyes—even while its little arms were stretching out to her!

She fell on her knees at the feet of that savage, she clasped his hand.

"Oh! spare him—spare him," was all she could articulate; for, with those words, her tongue, parched with agony, clove to her mouth. She would have given worlds for the ability to speak, vainly hoping she might thus move the Indian; but she could only grasp his hand more convulsively, and lift her dry, stony eyes in eager supplication to his face.

For he had paused, at her words; in his work of death, and she hoped—the poor, deluded mother!—she had hoped. She wound herself around his knees with one hand, she lifted the other to her child, for the moment almost believing he was relenting. And the babe had

crowed, and smiling, stretched down its little arm to hers. Vain hope, young mother! It was only to delude you thus that the savage fiend had withheld the blow midway.

The tomahawk descended. A shrill shriek of agony rose from the mother's lips. But, shriller than that shriek, simultaneously came the crack of a rifle, and the savage fell headlong without cry or motion, his blow spending itself on the floor.

Was it a dream—was it a miracle? The mother could scarcely believe what she heard or saw. Her babe alive and unhurt. The assassin dead. She glanced at the sweet, smiling face of her infant and pressed him convulsively to her bosom: then she looked up with a start, for a dark shadow fell across her.

But no Indian met her sight. The shadow was that of a tall, powerful man, who wore a buck-tail cap and an ordinary hunting undress, yet it needed not the epaulettes on his shoulder to show that he was one accustomed to command. Behind him, crowding up the narrow door-way and pressing forward in dense masses, came scores of men attired in the provincial uniform.

"Washington for ever! Down with the heathen murderers!" was the excited cry of his followers.

Into the apartment they burst, those brave sons of Virginia, with a wild hurrah, startling the astounded savages, on whom they instantly fell. It was scarcely a fight after the first minute: it was a butchery. As the soldiers drove the Indians back to the wall, they found the savages repelled on them from that direction, and with a roar of defiance, like a lion who has just shaken himself from the hunters, Harding, to the astonishment of his wife, sprang to his full height and renewed the fray.

In five minutes all was over. Not one of the savage assassins escaped: indeed they disdained quarter and died fighting. When the conflict was done, Harding sprang to his wife's side, bleeding indeed in a dozen places, but, as was subsequently found, not mortally wounded. The aged minister was dragged from under the heap of dead, bruised and stunned, but scarcely hurt otherwise, for he had remained unnoticed where he fell, and only suffered from being trodden down by the foe.

Harding was standing, with one arm around the waist of his wife, who, with her head buried on his shoulder, was now sobbing and trembling violently, the excitement which had sustained her being over. His other hand had dropped at his side, still holding the terrible axe. He was smiling at his infant, whose little round face was upturned, half in alarm, half in recognition

at his disordered countenance. Suddenly, the leader of the party which had come so opportunely to his aid, advanced.

"God bless you, sir, you have saved me, and these, who are dearer to me than myself," said Harding, and a tear stood in his eye. "I must ask your name, so that we can pray for and bless you night and morning."

A tear rose to the stranger's eye.

"My name," he said modestly, but with a quiet dignity that foreshadowed the future greatness of the man, "is Washington."

"Colonel Washington! Then Braddock has been defeated, and I understand all."

Washington nodded: then he resumed, "we are, as you suppose, retreating; and you had better join us. We must be off at once: it is not safe for you or us to remain here."

"You are right. We follow you, *the Saviour of ourselves and country*," answered Harding, enthusiastically.

Was it prophecy which thus foretold the future?

TRIALS OF HOUSEKEEPING.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

"WHAT shall I do?" said Mary Egmont, a few weeks after her marriage. "No girl!—and dinner to get, a thing I never did in my life!"

With a rueful countenance she proceeded to her task. It was already twelve o'clock, and they dined before two. There was a piece of beef in the house, besides some poultry and a steak. She abandoned the thought of either of the two former in despair, and resolved to try to cook the steak.

But the steak would not cook; for as she had never broiled one before, of course her proceedings were awkward. The fat got into the fire and blazing up burnt the meat, and all she could do, the steak would either scorch or remain raw. At last she sat down and cried heartily.

She was still crying and endeavoring to broil the steak when her husband came in. He knew nothing of the progress of affairs, for the servant had left the house only that day and without warning: but, seeing his wife's distress, he good humoredly declared he could dine on bread and butter, with a cup of tea, which his bride proceeded to get.

"I think I can procure you a servant, Mary," he said, after dinner. "My partner had a little bound girl before he broke up house-keeping, and I know he would be glad to get her a place. I will ask him this afternoon."

"I can do very well except at dinner, and when the washing and scrubbing is to be done," said Mary down-heartedly, and with a sigh. "At home there was never any call for us in the kitchen."

"You need not apologize, my dear," replied her husband kindly, and with a smile. "I know how young ladies are brought up now-a-days. But I will fetch home a servant to-night, depend on it."

Mr. Egmont was as good as his word. The little bound girl accompanied him home. She was indeed little: her eyes were little, her arms were little, she had a little snub nose, and her little, withered face was as dry and yellow as parchment. But she was active, and promised miracles. In Mr. Markle's family, she said, she had the charge of everything.

The next morning Mrs. Egmont went down into the kitchen to instruct her new servant. She found the little bound girl quite as intelligent as had been represented, and after spending an hour in overseeing her, Mrs. Egmont, discovering that Susan knew what to do far better than herself, retired up stairs.

Occasionally, however, during the morning, she went into the kitchen to watch the progress of the work, but on every visit Susan was found to be actively employed, and dinner, when two o'clock came, was punctually on the table.

"This looks like housekeeping," said Mr. Egmont, with glee, as he proceeded to carve the fowl. "Done to a turn! My dear, you have a treasure in that little girl."

For a day or two everything worked well. The little bound girl did wonders. Never was a servant so active and quick. But toward the close of her first week, Mr. Egmont said suddenly, at the dinner-table.

"My dear, see this spoon. I declare it looks as if it had just come out of the lard pot. Do, pray, order a clean one."

"Susan has forgotten to wash it," said Mrs. Egmont. "I see, after all, our new servant requires to be watched."

From that day there was nothing but trouble with the little bound girl. She was quick at her work, but incorrigibly dirty. Mrs. Egmont found house-cloths stowed away in the most filthy condition. Plates and pans were used without being washed; the milk pitchers were rarely scalded; and, to crown all, the refuse oil from the lamp was cast into the chocolate bowl, which was subsequently employed for its more legitimate purpose, after having been subjected only to a slight ablution. This last exhibition of slovenliness procured the discharge of Susan, her mistress having lost all patience.

Thus, for the second time, without a girl, Mrs. Egmont succeeded no better than before in her housekeeping. The beef was never roasted properly: the steak was either underdone or overdone: the coffee in the morning tasted, as her husband at last was forced to say, like slops; and the thousand little things required to be done in a house to keep it tidy and in order, were neglected, because Mrs. Egmont was too fatigued to attend to them, especially since her inexperience protracted her work.

At last she procured another servant, who, though but lately arrived from Ireland, seemed willing, cleanly, and good-humored.

We have forgotten to say that Mrs. Egmont resided in a pleasant country town, where it was the practice for the inhabitants to raise their own garden vegetables. One day she called her new servant.

"Biddy," she said, "we will have some beans for dinner, I think they are ripe by this time."

"And what are beans, ma'am?" innocently asked Biddy.

"Those vegetables growing in the garden."

See," and Mrs. Egmont led her out of doors and showed her the pods on the vines.

"Oh! yes, ma'am, now I understand. I know all about them," replied Bidly, with eager willingness to show her quick perceptions.

Accordingly her mistress left her, but in about an hour returned to see the beans shelled and put on to cook. She started back on entering the kitchen, for Bidly had pulled up vines and all, and there they lay covering the floor of the apartment.

"Sure, ma'am," said Bidly, in explanation, "I thought you biled the leaves too for greens."

The next day Mrs. Egmont, wishing to go out in the afternoon, left Bidly to prepare tea, a task which hitherto the mistress of the house had overseen herself.

"Be particular, Bidly, and have the kettle boiled by the time I return," said Mrs. Egmont. "I will make the tea myself while you serve the supper."

"Yes, ma'am, never fear," said Bidly, eager to recover the laurels she had lost the day before.

The first thing Mrs. Egmont did, on returning, was to walk to the kitchen, where she found Bidly all smiling.

"Everything's ready, ma'am, and the kettle biled," she said.

Mrs. Egmont looked at the kettle suspiciously; it was not hissing, there was no steam curling from the spout. She approached, and touched it. It was perfectly cold.

"This kettle is not boiled," she said in vexation.

"Shure, ma'am, and it is," said Bidly, eager to defend herself, "for to be certain, I made a roaring fire and biled it as soon as you had gone out. Its been biled these three hours."

The willing, though blundering Bidly was discharged, as the incorrigibly slovenly Susan had been before her; and Mrs. Egmont made a third trial by procuring an old servant who had lived in her mother's family. Now certainly her difficulties were over, she thought.

The very next day Mrs. Egmont told her new servant to clean out the cellar. Toward evening she went down to examine it and found nothing done.

"Why, how is this, Peggy?" she said, coming up into the kitchen. "Did I not tell you to clean the cellar?"

"Yes, Miss Mary," said the old servant, still using the name she had been accustomed to call her mistress by in childhood, "but I thought I knew better than you about it, and that it did not want cleaning yet."

The hot blood shot to Mrs. Egmont's cheek,

but she had such a high opinion of her servant's good qualities, that she thought it better to put up with a little impudence now and then sooner than lose so valuable an acquisition.

She did not know human nature yet. A better girl than Peggy had never been, so long as she remained with Mrs. Egmont's mother; but, in the house of the daughter, she thought she could be mistress, and indeed acted as such. She had known Mrs. Egmont from childhood, and was acquainted with her deficiencies in housekeeping: and, therefore, did only what she pleased, and in the order, and at the time she pleased. Her mistress bore with her awhile, but insolence succeeded to her original self-assurance, and at last Peggy was discharged.

But, by this time, Mrs. Egmont had learned the duties of a housekeeper, and with her next servant she adopted a rigid, though not exacting discipline, and took care to oversee much, if not everything, herself. In consequence she had little difficulty afterward.

"I had no idea," she said to her husband, "that housekeeping was such an art, or how lamentably ignorant of it I was when I married. One must not only learn how to work, and be careful to see things done, but must know also how to manage servants."

"I fear few young ladies are educated rightly in this respect," said her husband, "for the very thing they ought know most of, they are really least acquainted with, I mean housekeeping."

FIRST LOVE AND SECOND.

BY MRS. H. E. HOWARD.

"BELL!"

"Cousin!"

"Who is that divinity who has just entered the opposite box?"

"Do you mean that large woman with the red face, and immense turban?"

"Pshaw! Bell—you are not looking in the right direction! Just raise your opera glass, and look directly opposite at a young lady in white, with a wreath of flowers on her head."

"Oh! that is Miss Julia Elton."

"Are you acquainted with her?"

"Very slightly. She was at Newport this summer while we were there, and was the centre of attraction to all the young men, seeking either beauty or riches. She is the only child of a wealthy merchant who lost his wife four years ago, and who indulges Julia in every whim. Fortunately, I am told, she has a well formed character. Report says she has already rejected several suitors for her hand."

"I must get an introduction to the lady—she is really the only decent looking woman I have seen, except yourself, fair coz, since my return to America. Ah! I see my friend Charles Ashton is with her, say no more, I'm off!" And in a few moments his cousin saw him speaking to the lady who had so attracted his attention.

Alone, in the drawing-room of her father's house, sat Julia Elton, about six months after her introduction to Frank Morris. She held an open letter which she had just been reading, and a beautiful smile rested on her lip, though her eyes were full of tears. "Mine, mine forever!" she exclaimed, as she pressed the letter to her heart. "Oh, Frank! how little can you imagine, when you so timidly ask me to say that you are not wholly indifferent to me, that I have loved you for months, and have not even dared to hope for a return! How many, many times I have wept myself to sleep when I have thought that you have cared nothing for me, and now—the happiness is too great for me!" Sinking on her knees, she raised her streaming eyes to heaven; "mother! dear mother, look down upon your child, and rejoice with her." Hearing her father's voice at the drawing-room door she rose hastily, and wiping away her tears, met him with a smile, put Frank's letter into his hand, and ran to her own room to indulge her mingled feelings of joy and sorrow.

Mr. Elton read the letter, then sat in deep thought for some time. That she loved Frank, he had but little doubt; but it had been a dream

of his to wed her to the son of an old friend, Henry Stanley. The friends lived near each other, and Julia had always treated Henry with all the confidence of a sister. Nor had he ever thought of her in any other light than a brother should until her visit to Newport, where she passed three months. During her absence, he discovered that his feelings were really those of a lover; and after her return he was made wretched by her evident preference for Frank Morris.

Mr. Elton was, however, too indulgent a parent to think of opposing his daughter's choice, since he could bring nothing against Frank's character. He, therefore, returned the letter to Julia, telling her to answer it as she thought fit.

Soon after the engagement had taken place, however, Frank expressed such extreme solicitude for an immediate marriage, that Mr. Elton began to suspect there was some secret cause for his haste. The truth was that Frank had imbibed, while abroad, a taste for the miscalled pleasures of the gaming table, and had contracted debts to an enormous amount, of which he was afraid to let his employer know, for fear he would turn him out of his office, and thereby prevent his making a good match, wherewith he proposed to retrieve his fortune. To do him justice he was as much in love with Miss Elton as he could be with any one. Mr. Elton's suspicions being once aroused, he declined giving his consent to an immediate marriage; and in the meantime, made such searching inquiries into Frank's habits, that the whole story of his gaming debts was revealed: Mr. Elton himself, in disguise, having been a witness to Frank's devotion to play.

The next morning, after this discovery, Julia was called to her father's study. Mr. Elton scarcely knew how to begin his disclosures; but duty compelled him to speak; though in revealing the tale he suffered almost as much as his child did in listening to it. However he nerved himself for the task, and first giving her an account of his mistrust of Frank, proceeded to tell her what his own eyes had witnessed the preceding evening at the gaming-house. Julia, at the terrible tale, sank at his feet in a fainting fit, from which she was aroused with great difficulty, and carried to her own chamber. Here, at her own request, she was left alone!

Poor Julia! she knew her father could have no object to deceive her, and therefore she was forced to believe that Frank was unworthy of her. "How," thought she, "can I ever be happy with a husband that I cannot respect? After a short time he will neglect for me other pleasures, and what shall I become? Alas!

better is it for me to suffer now for a short time, than to render myself miserable for life by uniting myself with a gambler." But love now struggled to be heard. "Suppose," she asked herself, "that my rejection of him should cause him to commit still greater extravagancies? Ought I not to make the exertion to save him, as much as if he were my husband? What shall I do? Oh, my mother! would that you were here to advise and comfort me in this hour of trial!" Bursting into tears, she flung herself on her knees, and earnestly prayed for resignation to her fate, and strength to go through with her task. Feeling more calm after this act of devotion, she went to her father's study and begged him to advise her what to do. He represented to her the life of wretchedness she would lead with a man of no principle, and endeavored to convince her that if Frank's love for her was not sufficiently strong to induce him to forsake such amusements now, it could never be so after she became his wife. He told her, besides, that he had suspected her property, and not herself, was the chief object of attraction, and begged her concurrence in a scheme of his, in which, if he did not succeed in convincing her that such was the case, she would be at liberty to marry him if she chose. Julia acquiesced, though she felt certain that the scheme would fail.

In the evening when Frank called, Mr. Elton requested that he might have some conversation with him before Julia, who was dressing for a party, should appear. He then told him that his own property was not nearly so large as it had been represented, and that the estate which Julia received from her uncle would go to another branch of the family if she married under the age of twenty-one years. "She is now," continued Mr. Elton, "just nineteen years of age, and of course if she marries you as soon as you propose, you must take her without her fortune." Julia's entrance at this moment prevented Frank's reply.

During the drive to the party Frank appeared to be abstracted, and hardly seemed to hear what Julia said to him. Poor Julia! She could not believe that her father's disclosures to Frank could have made such a difference in his behaviour to her, and anxiously inquired if he were ill? But his answer was in so indifferent a tone that she could scarcely keep the tears from falling. On their arrival at the party, Frank exerted himself to appear more cheerful, and, for a while, hovered around Julia with all his wonted devotion; but, hearing a gentleman say there was a whist-room open above stairs, he could not resist the temptation. Taking the

opportunity while she was duncing to go there, he was soon so much engaged in the game that everything else was forgotten. In the meantime Julia, who was waiting to go home, was wondering what had become of him, when Henry Stanley told her where he was, and offered to speak to him; but she declined the offer, and requesting him to escort her, she returned home in a most unenviable state of mind. The next morning Frank called at the house, and was told that Miss Elton was engaged and could not see him.

Julia had invited company for that evening, and as she could find no plausible excuse where-with to postpone the visit, she made a great effort and appeared in the drawing-room ready to greet her friends as they arrived. Frank was the first to make his appearance, and immediately commenced finding fault with her for treating him so rudely on the previous evening. Julia replied that, finding he was engaged in a game which seemed to give him more pleasure than her society, she presumed he could not miss her. Frank then, stung with sudden jealousy, accused her of preferring Henry to himself. She replied that Henry was an old friend, and had proved himself more worthy of trust than a new one. Frank had never seen her appear so dignified, and he began to think he had been too hasty. He was a prey to uncertainty. All that he could boast of a heart was fairly caught by her beauty and accomplishments; but what her father told him had convinced him that his object in marrying her would not be attained, in as much as he depended upon her fortune to pay off his gambling debts. He took his leave with the rest of the company at a late hour, and Julia went to her room that night convinced from her present unhappiness that her life would be one of misery if she married him. A few days after Frank received the following letter from her:

"TO MR. MORRIS—

Sir—I am under the necessity of informing you that our engagement must end. From your recent conduct you will not, probably, be much surprised at this announcement. You have accused me of preferring another to yourself; though you knew when you said so that it was false! Could you indeed suppose I had promised my hand, when my heart did not accompany it. You do not know me! I never loved any one but you, or rather, I should say in the words of another—"I loved what I *thought* you were, not what you are!" We can never be happy together. Do not suppose that I have made up my mind hastily, or without a severe struggle! But flatter not yourself that I will change. We may never meet again in this world, and now, let me repeat, you are free!

Yours *no longer*,
JULIA ELTON."

Frank received this letter on his return from New York, whither he had gone the morning after Julia's party, to spend a week. He could not believe that Julia was in earnest, supposing her to be too much attached to him to break her engagement. But he little knew the strength of her principles. Julia did love, ay! loved him devotedly—but she loved the right more. She could not shipwreck her happiness for life: she felt it better to be unhappy awhile now. Besides Julia had pride, and Frank had, by his neglect, touched it to its core.

Frank read Julia's letter twice, and then with a "pshaw! I'll call and make it all up!"—took up the newspaper, and the first thing he saw was the following notice:—"Passengers in the ship C—— for Liverpool, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley, Henry Stanley, Jr., Hugh Elton, Esq., and daughter of Boston." Frank threw himself back in his chair, and cursed his folly that had so blinded him to Julia's merits. Now that she was gone, and he had no means of seeing, or communicating with her, he felt that he had thrown away his only chance of happiness; he recalled her dignified manners, her devoted attachment to her father, and last, not least, her professed love for himself.

"I will not give her up," thought he, "she will be absent but a few months, and when she returns I will be all devotion, and she will soon forget that I have ever been otherwise. As I have been successful at the gaming-table lately, I may possibly conclude to wait two years, when she will be of age, and, of course, in possession of her property. Seventy-five thousand dollars! the papa informed me. A pretty sum with what the old gentleman will leave! Besides, I really love her: so keep up good courage, she will yet be mine!"

Frank thus reasoned himself into believing that her absence was merely a trial of his love, and taking up his hat, he resorted to his accustomed haunt, there to drown his mortification in what he called pleasure.

It was about two years after these events, when hundreds of people were assembled upon the wharf at East Boston, to await the arrival of a British steamer which had just been telegraphed. Soon the gallant vessel hove in sight. The cheers of the spectators were answered by those of the passengers as the ship sailed up the harbor. On the deck stood Mr. Elton's party: Julia, more beautiful than ever, was leaning on her father's arm, looking earnestly on shore to see if she could distinguish one familiar face, when suddenly she turned to Henry Stanley, and seemed to be directing his attention to some person on the wharf. This person was

Frank Morris; but so changed by dissipation she could hardly recognize him. Delighted to be the first to welcome her to her native land, he sprang on board, and was going to assist her from the boat, when she gave her hand to her father, slightly bowing as she passed Frank.

He stood stupefied for a few moments, then forming his plan, went home and wrote a penitent letter to her, begging her to listen to his suit, and accusing her of having dismissed him without having given him an opportunity to explain his conduct. He concluded by saying, that he would wait for her answer before calling at her father's house. A few days after he had sent the letter he received an envelope containing that and another note, which read thus:

"MR. MORRIS—

I write this at the request of *my wife*, and beg when next you have occasion to address her you will direct to 'Mrs. Julia Elton Stanley.' You will see by the papers that we were married yesterday.

Yours respectfully,
HENRY STANLEY, JR."

Frank threw the note in the fire, and taking up the morning papers, read the following announcement.

"Married, yesterday morning, at Trinity Church, by the Right Reverend Bishop E—, Mr. Henry Stanley, Jr., to Miss Julia, only daughter of Hugh Elton, Esq. P. S.—We understand that the lovely bride, on the day of her marriage, came into possession of a very large fortune!"

Frank crushed the paper in his hand, and muttering a volley of oaths, strode out of the house to vent his ill-humor at his usual place of resort.

Julia was indeed the wife of Henry. She had resisted all his entreaties to be married before she left Europe, where both families had been travelling for two years, and where she had seen so many virtues developed in Henry's character, that she could not help contrasting him, greatly to his advantage, with Frank. She wished to see Frank once more, that she might be sure she had erased his image from her heart, and, having seen him, she could now say to Henry with perfect confidence—"I am yours at whatever time you choose to take me. My heart is so full of love for you that it could not give a single throb at the approach of one who once claimed it. I have only waited to be sure of this ere I became your wife."

Frank Morris married an heiress at last, but he did not love her as he had loved Julia. After spending all her property he left her and went to New York, where he was found one morning dead in his bed from a fit of *delirium tremens*.

MY SCHOOL DAYS.

BY LILLA HERBERT.

"Oh! ye voices gone,
Sounds of other years;
Hush that haunting tone,
Melt me not to tears!"

It is the dim and shadowy twilight hour. I am sitting in my own little chamber, watching the fading light of departing day, alone yet not lonely—for pleasant thoughts come thronging about me now—pleasant yet sad ones are they. I know not why it is, and yet this hour has ever possessed a strange influence over my spirit, softening my feelings and filling my heart with higher and holier impulses. It is the time when sweet memories of the past come crowding upon my brain—when each thought has a voice of its own. Ah, for meditations upon, and recollections of by-gone moments give me the twilight hour! With a youthful poetess I am ever ready to exclaim—

"Oh! holy is the hour,
When the shades of night draw round,
And the long and deepened shadows
Creep o'er the quiet ground;
When the glorious tints of even
Form a softer, greyer hue,
And the drooping flowers sparkle
With the crystal evening dew.
'Tis the time of busy thoughtfulness,
When memory binds us fast,
With cords of sweet remembrance
Of happier hours past."

And these "cords of sweet remembrance" have bound me now, for my memory is reverting to that fairest and sunniest period of life—my school-days!

In imagination I am again seated at the well remembered desk—I hear the busy hum of young, glad voices, and can distinguish each tone as in times of old—bright eyes and merry glances rest again upon my face, though many, very many of those once laughing orbs have long been closed in that slumber which "knows no waking."

Who does not love to muse upon the reminiscences of their school-days? For full of pleasantness are the days of early girlhood, when like humming-birds we sport amid the flowers, rifling each bud and blossom, and depositing the sweets deep within our hearts, there to remain till memory with a sigh again brings them to light. And yet, though strange, it is none the less true that we ever long for the period when these our brightest hours shall have passed away, when we can go forth and mingle with the busy world, forgetting, alas! that with womanhood too must come

"Life's conflict years,
Its phantom smiles—its living tears."

Few, very few of the gentle band who were my associates in the well known school-room, do I now meet in my daily paths. On some the blighting influence of the death-angel has fallen, and in their early beauty they have passed from earth. Others have gone to far distant climes, and with an aching heart I have bid them a long and last farewell. Then indeed have I felt the bitterness of parting! From some of those with whom I mingled in life's sunny morn I parted in coldness; when we now meet it is with the apparent indifference of utter strangers, and those unacquainted with us would little deem that we had once sat side by side, studied from the same book, and obeyed the mandates of the same kind teacher. To what sudden variations are friendships formed in girlhood subject! The impulse of a moment—a simple word or action, is but too frequently the cause of estrangement—each is too proud to recall or ask oblivion of the past, and thus friends break the bonds that have linked them together, though all the while there may not be a being dearer than the one from whom they so hastily turn. In such moments we can forcibly feel the eloquent words of the poet.

"And when the heart would gush with feeling
To catch one kind, one sunny look
When love would be a leaf of healing—
Coldness a thing we ill can brook—
Oh, it is hard to put the heart
Alone and desolate away,
To curl the lip in pride and part
With the kind thoughts of yesterday."

How many incidents connected with these early days can every mind recall! Mine is filled with multitudes of these old memories, and as one by one I draw them forth my heart lingers as yearningly over them as does the gaze of the miser upon his glittering hoard.

I remember a sleighing frolic taken in the depth of winter, when the snow was three feet deep. At this period I was daily an occupant of a stage that was employed to convey certain pupils of our academy to and from school.

We were getting rather weary of the four-wheeled omnibus, and were daily wishing from the bottom of our hearts that it only *would* snow so that we might occupy a sleigh, when suddenly one morning on arising, I found the ground enveloped in the long wished-for covering. All day long the snow descended in massive flakes, and the following morning the sound of sleigh-bells rang merrily through the streets.

That afternoon a large sleigh with four horses and a most good-natured looking driver, stood before the door of our academy. Quickly we girls to the number of twenty jumped in—scrambled into our seats—and giving the driver the signal of

readiness, he cracked his whip, the horses started, and away we went. As we drove through the streets, now nodding to an acquaintance who chanced to pass, now holding our sides to keep in the glee that would burst forth—many juvenile beaux were attracted toward us, and we had no lack of male attendants. As we glided onward every one greeted us with a smile—and often the young gentlemen of the town forsook their sports, and by mutual agreement entertained us with a full chorus of cheers—and if we happened to laugh very loudly we would now and then be slyly pelted with a snow-ball.

“A fine nest!” remarked one little chap, gazing soberly and scrutinizingly upon us. That boy was a wit—depend upon it.

“Plenty of pretty girls, but no gentlemen!” exclaimed a second, with an hurrah. Then as if to compensate for our want of beaux, he clung to the sleigh, at the same time ejaculating the favorite expression of all New York boys.

“Young ladies,” said a demure looking personage, a teacher in our academy, who had seemed excessively annoyed at a sudden outbreak of mirth among her youthful companions, “young ladies—pray *do* be quiet. Do you not see it is your own fault that you attract so much attention?” Scarcely were the words uttered, when bounce! came a huge snow-ball against the shoulder of our monitress, and loud and irrepressible laughter re-echoed among the degenerate young ladies. The poor victim of snow-balling turned quickly away to conceal the expression of her countenance, which betrayed too plainly that had she but possessed power to follow the dictates of her will, she would fain have delivered us unto the tormentors.

For more than a week we had sleigh-rides in abundance—and at length when the snow began to melt, and the streets were impassible to almost all kinds of vehicles, we were still obliged to ensconce ourselves in a sleigh, and enjoy what was rather vulgarly, but very pointedly denominated a “mud-ride.”

GOSSIPING!

BY "F. E. F.," AUTHOR OF A "MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE," "AARON'S ROD," &c.

"How glad I am to see you, Fanny. I was just wishing for you," exclaimed Mary Crawford, as her friend Mrs. Hastings entered.

"Ah! what's on the *tapis* now?" replied Mrs. Hastings.

"Sue and I are getting up a German class, and we want you to join us."

"Thank you—but my education's finished," replied Mrs. Hastings, with a slight shade of contempt in her manner. "I don't think I shall undertake German at this time of day."

"Why not?" said Mary. "You used to be fond of the study of languages."

"Oh, that was before I was married. It's well enough for you and Sue—but when you have a husband and children, Mary, you'll find you have plenty to do beside studying German," continued Mrs. Hastings, with some little assumption of matronly superiority in her tone.

"If my husband is in his counting-room from eight in the morning till six in the evening, and the baby's asleep in his crib three-fourths of his time as your's is, I think I'll contrive to find time to do all I want," replied Mary.

"I'm afraid I can't join you," said Mrs. Hastings. "I've no time. By the way, have you heard of this news about Ellen Stewart?"

"No—what?"

"Why you know she was to be married in September. And now all of a sudden it is postponed, and Livingston is going to Europe."

"Is it broken off?" inquired Mary.

"Not that I can find out," replied Mrs. Hastings, with much interest in her manner. "The family speak of it as being only postponed. Livingston, they say, is going abroad on business. But that is absurd, for we all know he has no business to take him abroad."

"And if he has, why should he not be married and take Ellen with him?"

"That's just what I said to Hetty," replied Mrs. Hastings quickly, "for it struck me as strange, and I wanted to find out the meaning of it. She seemed embarrassed for a minute, and then said—'oh, mamma could not hear of Ellen's leaving her' Such nonsense you know! Mrs. Stewart with her four grown up daughters at home, objecting to Ellen's going to Europe with her husband. It's the strangest thing that ever was! Ellen seemed so happy in the idea of being married and going to housekeeping this winter."

"What can it be?" said Mary.

"My belief," continued Mrs. Hastings, "is that Livingston himself has postponed it. You see if it don't break off the next thing. I'll find out all about it, however, from John Stewart. John can't keep anything to himself. And if I don't find it from John I'll get it from Anna Livingston."

"But how?" inquired Mary. "You can't well ask her."

"No—not exactly; but I'll speak of it, and rather in a tone of blaming Ellen, as if I thought she was trifling with her brother, and that'll vex her, and then it will all come out—that is, if Livingston is the one trying to get rid of the engagement."

"I don't know that," replied Mary. "She could hardly tell you even if it be so."

"I can judge from her manner, and what little she says. I know enough of them to put things together and draw my own conclusions, and I am not often wrong," she continued, smiling with evident pride in her own cleverness, and rising to go.

The next morning Mrs. Hastings called in again, quite eager and animated, with "well, Mary, I was right. Livingston has broken his engagement with Ellen Stewart. I met John Stewart last evening at Fenwicks, and he told me all about it." And then Mrs. Hastings gave a most piquant and animated relation of the conversation with Mr. Stewart of the evening before. A third friend and mutual acquaintance of the Stewarts soon after coming in, Mrs. Hastings, with great spirit and zest, related the whole story to her. After the affair had been thoroughly and satisfactorily discussed, one of the ladies said—

"Is the report of the Franklins separating true, Mrs. Hastings?"

"Yes. It is all settled."

"What is the cause?" enquired Mary.

"Oh! the fault is on both sides," said Mrs. Hastings readily. "It was a '*marriage de convenance*' on her part, and has proved a disappointment. He is a weak man and bad tempered beside. When you add poverty to that," she added laughing, "I think you have the 'component parts,' as your friend Miss Grant would say, Mary, of as much misery as you choose to make. And Letitia was not judicious in her management of him either. She always did despise him, and she could not help showing it too openly sometimes. And then he would fire up—and I remember a strange, amusing scene that happened one day when I dined there," and then Mrs. Hastings gave a spirited sketch of a family dinner and some domestic jars, that amused her friends

very much. And so from one thing to another she went on, and being, as she said, "very intimate" with the parties all round, she gave as complete an insight into their affairs as could possibly be desired.

In the evening, Miss Crawford wishing to amuse her brother, after the fatigues of the day, repeated to him after the fashion of most sisters or wives, the gossip of the morning.

He listened and laughed, and seemed quite interested in the Franklin story, when he suddenly asked—

"But how did you learn all this?"

"From Fanny Hastings. Fanny is certainly the most agreeable woman I know. She always has a world of news and gossip."

"So it seems," replied Mr. Crawford dryly.

"And pray how came Mrs. Hastings aware of all the interesting little particulars you have just repeated to me?"

"Oh, she is very intimate with the Franklins," said Mary, anxious to establish the authenticity of her story.

"She is, is she?" said young Crawford quietly.

"She has known Mrs. Franklin from a child," pursued Mary, "and has often staid there since her marriage."

"A valuable friend truly, is this same friend of yours, Mary," said her brother warmly, "and so she takes advantage of her intimacies with people to detail all their private affairs to the rest of the world."

Mary was not at all pleased with this attack on her friend, besides feeling it a little personal, as she had herself entered in full spirit on the tide of her gossip, without a thought as to either its propriety or prudence, and answered quickly.

"It would be nonsense now, Charles, to keep the secret that everybody knows. The Franklins have come to a separation, consequently their affairs are before the public. It would be rather absurd for Mrs. Hastings to effect a mystery about them."

"Certainly—but at the same time a friend would abstain from the details that only extreme intimacy could ever have brought within the reach of her knowledge."

Mary did not choose to answer this remark, and only said—

"Fanny is very pleasant. She is so graphic and spirited in her narrations—and then she keeps up so with everybody and everything."

"Yes, and she not only keeps up with every thing and everybody, but tells everything to everybody."

"Well I admit Mrs. Hastings is not prudent," replied Mary. "But your prudent people never are amusing—now Fanny is amusing."

"Yes—there is no doubt of it. But still I don't like her, nor your intimacy with her. In the first place she is intimate with too many people, and people too of such opposite tastes and characters," continued Mr. Crawford.

"That is the very thing that makes her so pleasant," said Mary laughing—"she sees and hears so much more than others, that she has ten times as much to say as most people—she has such droll powers of mimicry too. I wish you had seen her giving the Stewarts' propriety tones and dignified manner when they told her Ellen's marriage was postponed, and the decided way in which they turned off to other topics, as if all was said on the subject that could be said. But their grand airs would not go down with Fanny. She saw at once that something was wrong."

"Then they did not tell her?"

"They tell her!" exclaimed Mary, quite amused at the idea—"not they! You never knew more reserved people in your life about their own affairs than the Stewarts. No—no—Fanny got nothing from them beyond a suspicion that something was out of joint—but that was enough for her."

"How so?" enquired Charles quietly—"did she make the rest?"

"No," replied Mary, with some spirit—"she did not make it. She got pretty nearly the whole from John Stewart."

"From John? Well, he is a poor creature; but I should think that even he might have kept this to himself."

"I fancy he thought Fanny knew more about it than she did—she knows how to draw out John—she can get anything from him she chooses—and then with what she had already heard from Anna Livingston, and all he let drop, she put things together and made it all out. She is the quickest creature I ever knew," continued Mary, in evident admiration of her friend's sagacity.

"Well, I don't know what you women call it," replied young Crawford, "but such meddling and prying into other people's concerns would disgrace a man—I don't want to under-rate your sex, Mary, but you ladies do seem to me to have wonderfully little sense of honor. I do think if some of you were called upon to fight a duel now and then, it would do the whole of you good!"

"Why what's the matter now?" said Mary, "there's no breach of trust here certainly. They did not confide anything to Fanny. And she surely is not called upon to keep secrets that never were entrusted to her."

"A secret is a secret, Mary, and belongs to the person to whom it relates as much as their

purpose does—and I presume you'll admit that a purse found in the street should as properly be returned to the owner as if it had been confided to the finder. But this case is even worse—for Mrs. Hastings, from your own account, set herself regularly to *seek* for that information she had no business to know. And when by dint of curiosity and impertinence, and putting, as you call it, 'two and two together,' she ferrets out the whole matter, she does not rest until she tells you and half her acquaintance all about it. It's outrageous," continued Mr. Crawford, now thoroughly warmed up—"Mary I would have nothing to do with her. She's a dangerous woman."

"Oh, nonsense, Charles—how can she injure me?"

"Would you like some bright day to find yourself the subject of half the morning gossip in town?" asked her brother.

"There's no danger of that," replied the young lady.

"And are you perfectly willing to have all our domestic concerns shown up to the public?" continued her brother.

"There's nothing to tell," persisted Miss Crawford.

"Every family has its peculiarities, I presume," returned the young man.

"Now, Charles, what peculiarities have we?" answered Miss Crawford incredulously—"I am sure anybody is at liberty to tell all they know about us," she continued, in a tone of the most perfect and satisfied security of everything being beyond criticism as regarded themselves.

"As you please," replied her brother—"you'll probably find your mistake some time or other, but it's your own affair."

"Now, Charles, you shall not say anything more against her—I am sure you used to like her very much as Fanny Allen, and say she was very clever."

"And so she was," he replied—"but Mrs. Hastings is not the clever woman that Fanny Allen was—she has fallen short not only of what she might be, but what she was. Then she 'kept up,' as you call it, not only with people, but books. I used to look upon her not only as one of the most intelligent, but one of the most cultivated girls I knew."

"That's true," said Mary. "It never struck me before, but Fanny does not read as much as she did formerly. I remember she was considered almost a blue—and always had the cleverest men about her when she went into society."

And this in fact had been the case. As long as Fanny Allen was a belle and had literary beaux, she was a reader. She was quick and

spirited, and talked well, and read as long as she had an exciting motive to do so. Indeed she thought she was fond of it. But that she did not read as a purely intellectual pleasure is very certain, for as a married woman, whose society was chiefly composed of females, the habit soon fell off. She had been used, and liked, to produce a sensation—now gossip does that among women. Fanny was getting unconsciously more and more in the habit of producing immediate effect by lively chit chat and domestic gossip. Women love to get behind the scenes. They have an intuitive knowledge of character, and delight in motives and springs and feelings. And when there is no very nice sense of honor, and a quick turn for ridicule, and lively powers of narration, the success is certain. So Mrs. Hastings became popular as she ceased to be really clever. Her mind was now running altogether to gossip. "News" was her delight, nor was she particularly scrupulous about its being correct. She was very fond of society, and out forever, so had truly very little time to cultivate higher tastes, or more elegant pursuits. Indeed her domestic cares were not over strictly attended to, judging from the basket she had always full of things "to be" mended—and Mr. Hastings' complaints as to the state of his stockings and shirts were quite pathetic.

A few days afterward, Mr. Hastings told his wife in confidence at the breakfast-table that Mr. Newbold, an old acquaintance, would probably fail soon. No sooner was her husband gone out than Fanny, eager to know the whole truth, put on her bonnet and hurried to Mrs. Newbold. Mrs. Newbold was in low spirits, which heightened her visitor's suspicions. To discover the secret Fanny asked Mrs. Newbold if she was going to Newport in the summer. "She was not." "Then, perhaps, to Saratoga." "No!" In the end Mrs. Newbold, finding it impossible to invent excuses for these sudden retrenchments, burst into tears and revealed the truth. Mr. Newbold was terribly embarrassed: he had been so for eighteen months: a speedy insolvency was inevitable. Fanny was touched: she soothed the agitated woman with expressions of sympathy; but the moment she left the house, hurried to the Crawfords to detail her news.

"They've known their embarrassments for nearly two years," said Fanny. "They had no business to be so extravagant."

"But have they been so?" asked Mary.

"Yes—she was forever at the opera," replied Mrs. Hastings, "and dressed beautifully. She had two of those Canton crape shawls this spring

just because they happened to be the fashion, for she had a camel's hair; beside a French cashmere before."

In a few days the news was town talk, that is with a particular circle. Mary was quite animated on the subject, telling Charles all she had heard, not even omitting the two Canton crape shawls.

"Heavens! Mary," said he laughing, "how can you remember all the poor woman's dresses so? What memories you women have."

"Oh, I never noticed her dress particularly," replied Mary—"and I know her so slightly too I should not have remembered. But Fanny's quite intimate with her, and she told me all about it."

"What a woman that is!" said he, almost bitterly. "She seems to form intimacies chiefly that she may turn all her friend's inside out for the amusement of her acquaintance."

As time wore on, in the ups and downs of life, some changes took place in the Crawford family, and Mary now began to dread her friend Fanny.

"What shall I tell Fanny?" she exclaimed, in the bitterness of some family perplexity, one day.

"Tell her its none of her business," said Charles, almost fiercely, "if she asks questions."

"Oh, hush, Charles—I can't do that, you know I can't."

"If you must say anything, tell her the truth then," he replied stoutly.

"What!—and have it all over town before dinner time? Oh, Charles!"

"Then don't see her when she comes."

"She will get in," replied Mary despondingly. "There's no keeping her out when she thinks matters are going wrong."

"Well, Mary," he replied impatiently, "I don't know how to advise a woman in these matters. But I only wish she was a man, and I'd soon settle it—that's all," and so saying, he took his hat and left the house.

"What shall I do?" said Mary to her mother, with tears in her eyes—"I don't know which is worse, to see her or not to see her. Ah!" she exclaimed, "to be in suffering and mortification is bad enough, but to be made the gossip of half one's acquaintance is too much. And I know Fanny Hastings so well! I know she'll tell the L——'s, and the B——'s, and the Q——'s just how we look, and all we say."

"It looks like rain," said her mother consolingly—"she'll not come out on such a day, surely."

"Its just the weather she loves, and if it were

not, there's no weather that would keep her away," said Mary bitterly. "Ah! there's her ring," she added, with the expression of one under a sudden attack of tooth-ache.

It proved a false alarm, however, this time, and Mary had leisure to breathe again. But the door bell kept her in such a constant state of inquietude and agitation, that she was rather relieved at last when Mrs. Hastings did come, for come she did, armed with India rubbers and umbrella, "all wind and weather scorning."

That evening Mary was particularly irritable and dispirited.

"What is the matter, Mary?" said Charles at last. She sighed heavily as she answered—

"Nothing in particular, Charles."

"Have you seen Mrs. Hastings to-day?" he enquired.

"Yes," she answered, in a low, sad voice—"yes—by this time, Charles, the L——'s, and B——'s, and the Q——'s know as much, and more of our affairs than we do ourselves. We are furnishing the conversation of all their tea-tables this evening."

"Heaven preserve me from my friends," ejaculated the young man.

"I wish I had taken your advice, Charles. You were right—a gossip *is* a dangerous friend. Sooner or later we are all vulnerable somewhere."

"Certainly," replied her brother—"and we have no right to suppose a person will be true to us who is not so to others. In fact Mrs. Hastings is not true to herself. She was once a fine, intelligent girl—and what is she now—a gossip. By heavens," he exclaimed earnestly, "I'd rather my wife were deaf and dumb, than that she should be that regular pest of society—
A GOSSIP."

THE PORTRAIT.

BY MISS ANNE WHARTON.

I HAD gazed on many beautiful faces, and in many lands, but none ever met my eyes and touched my heart like this. I actually started with surprise at such perfect loveliness as the green curtain was withdrawn which concealed the portrait.

It seemed too purely, too perfectly beautiful to be the pictured form of a human being. I turned to my aged conductress to ask the name of the original. The tears were in her eyes as she replied, "that, sir, is Madeline Wortly, the picture was completed the day she was nineteen; need I tell you of her fate, or have you heard it spoken of in the village? for it is well known." I had not, and the old woman placed seats for us opposite the picture, and thus began:—

I have been housekeeper in Sir Alfred Wortly's family nearly forty years, and have seen the alterations which time has made with a pained and grieving heart. The hall has fallen to decay, and all around and within it looks gloomy and deserted; but alas! that is nothing to the change, the blight that has come upon its once happy inmates. It was a gay time when my master brought home his young bride from foreign parts, with her soft gentle voice and pale delicate cheek, and gayer still, when the bells rang and the bonfires blazed to welcome the birth of her infant. She was a kind mistress, and a good and gentle wife, and one would have thought that when all hearts loved her, and all voices welcomed her, she must have been happy, and so, indeed, she was generally thought to be, but I could see more clearly, and knew well that the lip could scarce conceal its quivering, even by the smiles which wreathed it. Whether she grieved for her own sunny Italy, or whether her heart had found another home than Wortly Manor I knew not; but grieve she did, silently and secretly, and her cheek grew paler, and her step more feeble, until Sir Alfred became alarmed, and wearied her with persuasions to try change of air and scene, but to no purpose; it was the only request I ever knew her to refuse, but in that she was steady. After the birth of her child she grew rapidly worse, and it was evident to all but her doating husband that she was sinking. He would not believe it, and went on hoping, even against hope, that she would recover; at length, the blow fell—my mistress died! And from that hour Sir Alfred was an altered man. He was not young when he married, and now he appeared much older than he really was; nothing

could engage his attention, or interest his feelings, but his motherless girl. Not only the love he had borne his wife, but all he had ever felt for any living being seemed transferred to her.

A blithe, happy-hearted, beautiful creature was Madeline Wortly; she had a kind word and a cheering smile for all, there was not a villager but knew and loved her; she inherited her father's high and generous disposition, and her mother's deep and passionate feelings. I had been present at her birth, and watched her with almost a parent's care till now, and few, if any, but myself, knew the strength and fervor of her feelings. They were naturally wild, and habitually under too little control. I used often to tremble at the extremes to which they might some day lead her, and even tried to check her in her expressions of affection or dislike; for she felt everything in extremes, and then she would weep and express sorrow in such passionate words that she unwittingly repeated the fault even in her repentance. You would not have wondered at her father's love could you have seen them as I have, when she had gone to plead for some culprit in disgrace; she used to fling her arms round his neck, and lean her glowing cheek upon his forehead, letting her long ringlets mix with his grey hair, and fall upon his shoulder; and so she would stand, and plead in her own peculiar manner, as though her life depended on his answer. And seldom had she to plead long ere the request was granted.

I will not weary you with a longer description of her childhood; suffice it, she grew in beauty as in years. The time came, at length, when others sought her love, and tried to woo her from her home to halls of splendor. She would not listen to them; she loved her father too well, she said, to wish to leave him. Well, I guessed that Madeline's was not the heart to be content forever with such love, and so it proved, for shortly afterward she owned to me she had, with her usual precipitancy, "plighted her faith," to use her own words, "to one worth all the glittering parade of her former lovers." "He was not rich," she said, "but she was, so that was of no consequence; at any rate her word was given, and at all hazards should be kept." Sir Alfred, as usual, only studied his child, and it was soon a settled thing.

Captain Euston was exactly the man to captivate such a heart as Madeline's, longing to associate itself with something noble. He was young, handsome, generous, and, like herself, high-spirited to a fault; he could not rest under the shadow of an insult offered either to himself or those he loved; and their proud, high tempers

were so much alike, that I half feared for their happiness.

There had been a gentleman named Forrester staying at the Manor House for some days previously to Miss Wortly's birth-day, which was to be celebrated, as usual, by a large party in the house, and the villagers dining on the grounds, the evening generally terminating with dancing and fireworks. Sir George Forrester and Capt. Euston had not found each other's society very agreeable, it would appear, for they avoided each other as much as possible, and when compelled to meet strove to appear ceremoniously polite. Why this was, I never knew; but I was sorry to perceive that Madeline, with the waywardness of youth and beauty, listened to the flattering speeches of Sir George with rather more attention than was necessary. It was not that she liked him in reality, for it was impossible with the shadow of a preference in her heart for Captain Euston, the frank, the noble, to bestow a serious thought on a being like the other, however devoted or incense-breathing he might be. And that she did love the former almost to adoration I am assured; but he never flattered, and, perhaps, the beauty wished to bear herself praised by the lips she loved best, and sought to pique him into rivalling the other, but she little knew her lover if thus she hoped. The morning of her birth-day arrived, and her father showered blessings and presents upon his darling. Almost all had some trifle to bestow, and thought themselves honored by its acceptance. Captain Euston was stepping forward to congratulate her, and she looked so lovely and so graceful, that he forgot her late caprice and unkindness in the warmth of his love and admiration. He had some time before promised her his picture on this day, and was about to offer it when Sir George entered the room, and walking quickly up to Madeline, and, taking her hand, began complimenting her in such a strain that after the first few words Euston turned away with a cheek like marble, and a brow in which the veins seemed bursting. Half an hour afterward he was pacing the garden, with what feelings I cannot tell, when a light touch was on his arm, and Madeline whispered, "and have you nothing to give me, Henry?" "Nothing, Miss Wortly, that I can flatter myself you would value!" was the reply. "Indeed you are mistaken, Henry. I would value anything you give me," urged the girl. There was something in the tone of her voice he could not resist, and, though not reconciled to bestow the miniature, he broke a small branch from a clematis near to which they were standing, and taking the flowers therefrom, made them into a little bunch and

offered them; he would have spoken, but he was interrupted by Sir George, who had, perhaps, been watching them. They separated, and did not meet again till dinner, when, instead of the jewels which generally sparkled among Madeline's curls, a small bunch of clematis only rested there. Euston saw it, and in an instant was by her side, whispering words which sent the rich blood to her cheek, and for awhile they were the happiest of all. Alas! that the spirit of envy should have again crept in to mar their joy and spread a blight, and endless sorrow over all.

It was later in the evening when I again saw Miss Wortly, and she looked restless and uneasy. I instantly remarked it, and she owned she thought it unkind of Captain Euston to absent himself on such an evening; she said he had been away upward of an hour, and she was waiting for his return ere she would dance. "But where is Sir George, my love?" asked I, anxious to hear how she would speak of him, and happy to find by her answer that he had at last wearied her, "oh, he is away too, I believe," she said, "and don't ask me about him any more; he has made himself particular in his behavior toward me all day, and I know Henry does not like him. Then came the tale of the morning, and a hope that she had pleased him by wearing his flowers.

"And where are they now, dearest?" I inquired, perceiving they were no longer in her hair. "Here, are they not?" she answered, raising her hand to her brow with a hurried exclamation; I could not answer, for I was that minute called by several voices; the music below suddenly ceased, the sound of many footsteps and suppressed tones was heard outside my door, but the words "duel," "dangerously wounded," and "Captain Euston," met our affrighted ears. I begged Madeline to be calm, and promised to ascertain the meaning of the dreadful words. Alas! alas! there was but little to obtain; the flowers which had fallen from Madeline's hair, had been exhibited by Sir George Forrester to Captain Euston as a gift from the wearer; what words passed on either side I know not, but I know too well they ended in Euston insisting on instant satisfaction, as it is called; others interfered but to no purpose; they walked into the grounds, the distance was measured, the pistols raised, the signal given, and Henry Euston was in eternity! Sir George had also received his antagonist's ball, and was carried in a state of insensibility from the field.

The wound of Captain Euston was examined, not from any hope of doing good but for form's sake; when that was over, and the doctors had declared their presence was useless, Sir Alfred

sought his daughter; he had lingered in the hope of carrying some good news, and scarcely dared to witness the effect his words would produce. We entered the room in which I left her, she was on her knees with her face buried in a sofa cushion. I half hoped she had been praying, but that was dispelled by the first glance at her face.

Now were exhibited the fatal proofs of the long indulgence of a naturally uncontrollable temper, wanting the curb of good management, and above all sadly wanting the spirit of religious resignation to a Divine Will. "You see that picture, sir," continued the old lady, pointing to the one I had so much admired, "such was she in the morning, and if possible more beautiful, and now in one short hour even her fond father could scarcely recognize her. She had shed no tear, she had not uttered a word, but every feature was convulsed, and there were lines on her brow deep as those furrowed by years on her father's. We had no need to speak, she understood by our looks that which, I do not think, one present would have dared to utter, and motioned with her hand that she would see him. 'You had better not love,' sobbed Sir Alfred. She tried to speak, but the attempt almost choked her. I knew that to refuse her in her present mood would be even more dangerous than complying, and we led the way to the room in which he lay. She advanced to the couch, and stood beside it with folded arms and closed lips; I had expected screams and fainting, but was not prepared for this. Her silence was unnatural and alarmed her father; he gazed on her for some time, and then taking her cold hand besought her to speak to him, if only one word. She answered not, she never removed her eyes from the face of her dead lover. Sir Alfred could bear it no longer, he threw himself on his knees before his child, and the tears almost blinded him as they rolled down his furrowed cheek. 'Speak to me, for God's sake speak to your old father, my own, my beautiful, my innocent; but one word, my Madeline, but one; see, see, I kneel to you for one look, my child!'

"For an instant his voice seemed to recall her senses, she raised both hands to her forehead, and then followed a wild, terrific, horrible laugh. She was, and is still, a raving maniac. Sir George, the cause of this misery, was compelled to fly his native land, and became a conscience-stricken wretch; the bullet which had pierced his side, and which could not be extricated, disabled him from making any exertion. The sufferings of his victims were slight in comparison with his own."

THE STARS.

BY MRS. ANNE P. DINNIES.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar." WORDSWORTH.

SURELY there are supernal influences exerted over every living being, which it would be impossible for even the most ingenious casuist to explain, otherwise than by ascribing them to the reminiscences which the soul experiences of its original heaven; and which create in it that vague, but intense desire for the mysterious and the pure, which all must be conscious of having felt; though few, perhaps, have sought to trace its cause, or paused to develop its effects.

The influence of the moonlit heavens over the mind of man has long been admitted; and philosophy has vainly endeavored to detect its origin or modify its effects. The stars "which are the *poetry* of heaven," are, perhaps, the most delightful companions which nature bestows upon her worshippers. They watch around the cradle of infancy, light us through the devious paths of youth and manhood, shine over our declining years, and shed their pensive lustre upon our silent grave. Touched by this constancy it is impossible to gaze upon them without a consciousness of their truth, and we involuntarily view them as our friends. We hold communion with them in our sorrow, and appeal to them for sympathy in our joys. We identify them with those we love; and their sublimating power gives a tinge of sentiment to our feelings, and a shadow of superstition to our thoughts. We draw dark auguries from their obscured radiance, or sweet promises from their brilliancy. In the language of Byron, "they are a beauty and a mystery, and create

In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life have named themselves
a star."

In every mood, in every situation, the mind becomes soothed and elevated while contemplating the firmament. The clouds which sorrow

has hung upon the spirits fade before the holy aspirations which fill the soul as it embraces the idea of eternity conveyed by the boundless expanse of air. The doubts which disappointment has engendered, give place to hopes so blinded with dreams of the future, that tranquillity falls upon the heart—and in communion with these glorious revelations of Divinity, the world, its trials, and sufferings are forgot.

Not long since I was watching by the couch of sickness when midnight settled upon the earth, and found the sufferer wrapped in the slumber of exhaustion. The night breeze came freshly in at the open casement, and the moonlight rested upon the world like a silver curtain. Gradually I approached to inhale the one, and gaze upon the other. Stars were in the sky like gems upon a royal robe, and light clouds floated about in detached masses, with their illuminated edges, rendering the horizon more beautiful from the variety they afforded. I looked long and earnestly upon the scene, and my spirit owned its tranquilizing effect.

Nature seemed to sleep; and earth was in harmony with the heaven that canopied its beauty. The stars, those bright intelligences, seemed to hold converse with each other, and recalled the idea of the inspired writer of their "singing together for joy." I felt a strong desire stir within my bosom for that wonderful love which taught the Chaldean of old to interpret their language, and prophecy their connexion with the sons of men. Presently one star more luminous than the rest attracted my attention, and became associated in my thoughts with one young in years, brilliant in intellect, and buoyant with hope and aspiration. I dwelt upon its course with interest, and imagined it a type of his destiny. As I watched it, clouds gathered around its path, and almost obscured its glory; but it struggled for a moment, and by the power of its own light pierced their fleecy folds, and calmly pursued its upward and steady way. On, and still onward was its proud career, until it reached the zenith of the arch, and shone down in resplendent lustre on a thousand eyes. My bosom

throbbed with a feeling of gratulation at its success, until a low voice seemed to awaken from its recesses, and ask—"why, oh, watcher of the midnight stars! dwellest thy spirit so fondly upon the mysteries of another's being? What unto thee are the triumphs of the proud and the gifted, whose lofty destiny is so far above thee?"

And then another voice answered. "It is but the eidolon of the beautiful and the pure—and it is pleasant to mark its struggles after excellence, and to know that it will yet attain to perfection. It is but one of the dreams which fancy weaves to brighten the realities of life—one of the roses flung amidst the highways of earth to conceal the thorns which overgrow its surface. Peace then, stern monitor, and let the heart revel in its visions of innocence and gladness!"

I turned again to the sky, and now another star met my sight. Oh! how sweetly lustrous was this one. It was faint, but inexpressibly calm and beautiful. It shone like a smile on the face of night. I watched it—could it be fancy?—it seemed suddenly to grow dimmer.

By some strange feeling I connected that star with my sick friend. I trembled as it grew dim, and rejoiced when it again shone out.

All at once a deep sigh recalled me to the bedside of the beautiful being whose slumber had given a transient respite to my anxiety. A change, touching as her own loveliness, had fallen upon her features, and the gentle spirit which had hallowed her short existence was passing softly away to its native heaven—the fair girl was dying! She had just entered her sixteenth year, and was one of these rare instances of perfect goodness which have sometimes been permitted to linger upon the earth, and teach us how much of excellence a mortal may attain. Beautiful Josephine! I marked the last smile that played upon her lips, and watched the flickering rays of intelligence fade from her soft blue eyes.

She had ceased to breathe, yet still I gazed on her. Like a holy seraph she seemed to sleep, so calm, so innocent, so celestial was the beauty of her face! A voice whispered within me. "There is an angel more in heaven!"

I turned, by an irrepressible impulse and looked out on the night, as if I half expected to see the disembodied spirit taking its flight above.

But all was as mild and still and lovely as before, only I looked in vain for the sweet and fading star I had been lately contemplating. *It was no more visible.* Could it have been a meteor?—or was it the star of Josephine? Who shall say?

MAJOR O'TOOTLE'S COURTSHIP.

BY JOSEPH A. NUNES.

CHAPTER I.

MISS BRIDGET McFADDEN, or Miss Biddy McFadden—for by the latter familiar abbreviation of her christian name, she was usually addressed—was a young lady—or rather a lady not young—but being unmarried, was of that certain age, which, as the poet says, “the most uncertain age appears.” In fact, for the truth must be confessed, Miss Biddy McFadden was on the wintry side of forty; and though she never confessed to more than thirty, her friends were charitable enough—without imputing to her a wilful anachronism—to suppose that she had unintentionally omitted to count Saturdays, Sundays, and all the holydays.

It was a matter of great mortification, and deep regret to Miss McFadden that she had never been married—or what was worse—that she had never received even a proposal; and this reflection it was that tended in a great degree to render acid her disposition, naturally not the most sweet and amiable.

The graces indeed had not been lavish with their gifts upon the person of Miss McFadden, for it was of the most robust and masculine proportions; she being five feet nine and a half inches in her stockings, and weighing something in the neighborhood of a hundred and eighty pounds. Nor could the features of Miss McFadden act as a counterpoise to the unattractiveness of her person; for though not sharp, they were prominent, shrewish, and far from beautiful; and her complexion was of that sandy hue, which exists only where freckles do most abound. There was one part of her person, however, in which Miss McFadden took inordinate pride; and that was her hair, of which she had a great profusion. It is true that it was red, and some were malicious enough to declare that it was *not her own*.

Miss Biddy McFadden had known the pinchings of poverty from infancy, and it was only when she was about six and thirty, that, by the death of a remote relative, she became possessed of his estate, amounting to the snug sum of two thousand pounds. From this time might be dated her rapid rise to influence and fashion among the gossips of Catagrowl—a small town in the county of Cork. Among the maturer and poorer maiden ladies her sway soon became unlimited, and at sixpenny whist she was considered an oracle. This was her favorite amusement; and her house was the principal rendezvous for all

the antiquated of both sexes who delighted to participate in it.

Nor, in speaking of Miss McFadden, must the name of her chief friend and confidential adviser, Nancy Doolan, be omitted. Miss Nancy Doolan, like our heroine, was a maiden lady, and somewhat in the wane, having already past her fortieth year; but with the aid of paint, powder, etcetra, she managed to keep off the appearance of maturer years, and to conceal the wrinkles that had begun to make sad havoc in her thin face.

In person Miss Nancy Doolan was a contrast to her robust friend; she being both short and lean: moreover Miss Doolan was poor—not absolutely poor, for her brother, who was in the excise, allowed her twenty pounds a year, upon which sum she managed to live, and indeed to keep up the reputation of being well to do in the world; her boon friend Miss McFadden alone being aware of her precise circumstances. Nor can it be denied that it was the difference in fortune which first attracted these two ladies to each other; not that it should be inferred that the one was presuming, and the other, a sycophant; for Miss Nancy, with her pretensions would have scorned the latter appellation; yet she nevertheless felt that two thousand pounds was—two thousand pounds—and to have a friend who possessed that sum, was the next thing to possessing that sum herself; and it was certainly gratifying to Miss McFadden to meet with the deference and respect for her opinions, which was displayed in the conduct of Miss Nancy Doolan.

Many years had elapsed since these ladies had first become acquainted with each other, and many years had their friendship kept on in the even tenor of its way without meeting with any serious impediment to obstruct its progress; but this is a world of change—all sublinary things are subject to mutations; and so it was with the friendship that has just been recorded, which one little circumstance was doomed to interrupt forever, and cause a catastrophe that was to change it into the bitterest enmity.

CHAPTER II.

IN the town of Kildare, at the sign of the Saw and Sausages, dwelt the redoubtable Major O'Tootle—a green-grocer by profession, though a true son of Mars, and a major in the Kildare militia. Mr. O'Tootle, or Major O'Tootle, (for he always insisted on the title) was a gentleman who had already passed the heyday of youth without ever having been seduced into matrimony. But the major now began to think that he had neglected a duty, and to consider that

It was time for him to look about in order to select a lady who might share the honors of his commission, and participate in the labors of his shop. Not that the major was an old man—far from it—but he had passed that period of youth when the passions alone are sufficient prompters to matrimony. It was merely the dictates of reason which induced him to think of a wife; and reflection caused him to conclude also that as he cared very little for love, money should be a consideration to which he should not be inattentive. There was one thing above all others, however, which he resolved that the future Mrs. O'Tootle should possess, and that was a *good head of hair*. All other desirables might possibly be unattainable, but this was a *sine qua non*, and without it he resolved that he would never become a Benedict.

He was in the midst of reflections on this subject, and going over in his mind a catalogue of all the eligible unmarried ladies of his acquaintance, when he received from Mr. Morgan Botherby, of Catagrowl—his cousin only four times removed—an invitation to pay him a visit, and spend some weeks at his house. This invitation was decisive, and Major O'Tootle immediately came to the conclusion that Kildare could not furnish him with a wife; but that he was destined to procure one, such as his heart yearned for, at the town of Catagrowl, whither it was his intention to journey without delay: so he called his boy, Phelim O'Flathery, and after a long lecture about the responsibility into which he purposed inducting him, he gave him the entire charge of the Saw and Sausages, with full powers to barter, sell and receive the profits, while he should be accomplishing the double object of visiting his cousin—only four times removed—and seeking for a wife to do the honors to himself and his mansion.

"And so," said Mr. Botherby, to his cousin Major O'Tootle, as they sat discussing their private affairs on the first night the latter arrived at Catagrowl, "and so," said he, "Felix you've made up your mind at last that you ought to get married?"

"You may well say that, Morgan," replied the major, as he poured another glass of punch from the stone jug beside him. "The truth is, cousin, I'm tired entirely of living all alone, and it gives me sometimes a wakeness to see every body else married, and raising up a house full of spalpeens to pass the time wid, and to carry the family honors to the next gineration. I look round sometimes and axes myself where's all the boys that we used to have sich rollicking times wid, and I answers, they're married. Where's all the purty girls then? says I; and

I answers again, they're married too—then I walks up and down the shop, and I sees the sausages hanging in links thegither to the rafters; and the hams strung up in couples—the herrings thegither in one box on the counter, and the praties—like childer of the same father—all lying beautiful and snug in the same peck measure! And I says to myself, says I, Phalix! Phalix! what is it you're afther? letting the praties and the sausages, and the hams and the herrings, give you a lesson in your duty! Remember, Phalix, says I, you've a name to keep up; and you are not as young, Phalix, now, as you was your last birthday, ten years ago; and if you don't make hay while the sun shines, sorra at all is the bit of hay you'll make at all, at all!"

"And can I help you to a wife?"

"To be shure. It's not purticular that I am, Morgan, for you know I'm not a young man myself; so that it won't fret me if Mrs. O'Tootle is not a chicken—if only she has a purse in her pocket."

"Then I can suit you to a hair, Felix," said Mr. Botherby.

"Give me yer hand this minit, for the word!" exclaimed the major; "sure you're the best friend I've got in the world. I see you're going to be as good as a mother to me."

Mr. Botherby then went on to give his cousin a description of Miss Biddy McFadden, and Miss Nancy Doolan; both of whom, he observed, were reputed rich.

From the description, it was evident the major preferred the color of Miss Nancy's hair, if not Miss Nancy herself, and when the description of her attractions was made full, by the mention of the superiority of her teeth, he was decided, and exclaimed—"faith, Morgan, and I'll take the little one!"

CHAPTER III.

MR. BOTHERBY was as good as his word, and introduced his cousin, the major, on the following evening, at the house of Miss Nancy Doolan, making only a blunder at the commencement of the acquaintance, by calling him *Mister* O'Tootle.

"Excuse the bit of mistake Morgan has made, my dear," observed the major, addressing his intended charmer, and interrupting his cousin in the midst of the introduction; "but he should have said *Major* O'Tootle—not a bit less am I—of the Kildare malitia: and what's more, your own adoring servant, Miss Nancy."

The major was not a bad judge of character and as he intended the campaign should be as short as it was conclusive, he commenced it by an attack that was decidedly impressive. Miss

Nancy was quite overcome with the compliment. It had been so long since she had heard anything of the kind addressed to herself, that she had begun to think her day for receiving compliments had quite gone by. But this revived hopes which had long lain dormant in her breast. Dreams of white favors—bride's maids—wedding cakes—priests and throwing stockings, immediately floated with singular distinctness through her imagination. She simpered—tried to blush—curtsied to the compliment, and drew her chair very close to the major's, who on his part was nothing loth to follow the example.

It is a very easy thing to become fascinated when one is pre-determined to be charmed; and so the major found, for, notwithstanding the diminutive figure—the spare appearance—the thin visage, and the traces that time had impressed upon it—he was in love! at least he said he was. If she was short, he was tall enough for them both. If she was thin, he had flesh enough; and she would grow handsomer when she became Mrs. O'Tootle; and the thought of her fortune made her face look fair and full; and then she had such a head of hair, and such a set of teeth!

"O, but it's yourself that's a darling," said the major, as he placed his broad hand on her skinny shoulder.

"Now, major, you know you're only joking," she replied, as she affected coyly to withdraw herself.

"It's not the least taste in life of joking I am," exclaimed he, as he prepared to follow up the attack. "Haven't you the purtiest teeth and hair in all Catagrowl?"

"And sure that is something," she replied, pleading guilty to the soft impeachment, "and its not every one, major, that has the same. I could name some people who'd give their eyes for my hair if they could get it; but it's what I won't do, for they are friends of my own, and it won't be me that'll expose them."

The absence of Miss Nancy was a matter of wonder among the select little party of ancients assembled at Miss McFadden's; and of not less wonder even to Miss McFadden herself. It was a circumstance that had not occurred for years before, and considerable anxiety was felt lest some accident had befallen the missing lady. A number of surmises were hazarded; and they even stopped in the middle of a game of whist to discuss the cause of this wonder. Some contended that she must have been seized with a sudden catarrh; others replied that a catarrh would never have detained her. One asserted that it must be the rheumatiz; another denied that its approach could be so sudden; and several

suggested that a messenger should be dispatched to ascertain the cause, and remove all doubts on the subject; but as all present were too deeply interested in the game then in progress, no one volunteered to be the envoy. It was, however, at length concluded that Miss Biddy's maiden servant should be sent to Nancy Doolan's to learn whether it was catarrh, rheumatiz, or any of the evils to which flesh is heir that deprived Miss McFadden and her friends of the pleasure of her company.

Who can picture the consternation of the company, when the servant returned and announced that Miss Doolan was not only in a state of perfect health, but that she was engaged in entertaining Mr. Botherby and his cousin, Major O'Tootle, of the Kildare militia.

The announcement acted like a fusee thrown into a powder magazine—causing an instantaneous explosion. All were anxious to know who was Major O'Tootle, of Kildare? and how came he thence? and what doth he here? and why was he and Mr. Botherby at Miss Doolan's, instead of being at head quarters—that is at Miss McFadden's—where they should have been. Could it be possible that the major was a marrying man; and that Nancy Doolan, getting an inkling of the fact, was the first, by her management and superior information on the subject, to secure the prize? All the maiden ladies were very indignant when this thought flashed across their minds. It was outrageous! it was indelicate! it was an absolute deception practiced on their unsuspecting natures by Miss Nancy, thus to be the first in the march toward matrimony. It was not to be endured! and patience would cease to be a virtue if it could be put up with!

As far as Biddy McFadden was individually concerned, she determined that the first thing she would do on the following morning, after a hasty breakfast, would be to pay a visit to the artful deceiver, and ascertain the extent to which they had all been duped. She repressed her anger, and corked up the vials of her wrath, but kept them ready at any moment to be drawn off, and poured on the devoted head of the treacherous Nancy Doolan.

CHAPTER IV.

It was easily ascertained on the succeeding day who Major O'Tootle was: and that he was not only a major in the Kildare militia, and proprietor of the Saw and Suasages; but that he was also, like Doctor Syntax, in search of a wife. Nor did Biddy McFadden find it difficult to discover that he had been very particular in his attentions to her late friend. There was a look of triumph in the eye of that diminutive,

though amiable lady as she welcomed her large coteremporary, and there was an air of independence in her manner which had never before made its appearance.

All this was very visible; yet Miss McFadden made no audible comment upon it. She had had a night for reflection, and her wrath had subsided into a settled plan: her tactics were changed, and she resolved to play the politician instead of the warrior. She therefore appeared to take no notice of the alteration she observed, but endeavored to lure confidence by seeming kindness and displays of affection. This plan was as successful in its execution as in its conception; for Miss Doolan, thrown off her guard by a course of conduct different from what she expected, and from what she would have displayed had their positions been reversed, freely unbosomed herself to her wily antagonist. She confessed, that though the gallant major had not actually popped the question, yet he had expressed himself in such a manner as to leave no room to doubt his intention; and that she firmly expected before many weeks to be called to the altar. Miss Biddy congratulated her friend upon the conquest, and begged to be made acquainted with the happy swain. She insisted that he should be introduced at her house; and was so pressingly hospitable in her invitation that she induced Miss Nancy to promise to spend that very evening with him at her mansion.

The same party that had met on the previous evening, assembled at an early hour on this occasion, and all were on the *qui vive* to see the man who was to break the spell that hung over the maiden ladies of Catagrowl. Never did tongues go faster or louder in discussing the merits of any transaction. But all things must have an end, and the conversation was brought to a premature conclusion by a knock at the street door, which indicated the arrival of the expected guests.

"Here they are," exclaimed Miss Tabitha Dunleavy, a tall, thin old maid, with a villainous squint in the right eye.

"Sure, I wonder if he's with her?" asked Miss Molly Rourke.

"In coorse he is," replied the first speaker; "she wouldn't wait so long to come by herself. Only let Nancy Doolan alone to shuffle the cards, and she's sure to have the odd trick."

"Hush!" whispered Miss Fadden, as she raised her tall form to do the honors. "They're coming. Don't let them hear us speaking of 'em."

She was right, for she had scarcely concluded when in marched the major, ushered by Miss Nancy. The lady appeared a little confused, it is true; but it was a confusion arising from

exultation, and not from shame. In the excitement of the moment she introduced her companion as *Mister* O'Tootle, but modesty did not prevent him correcting the mistake.

"Major, darling, major," said he, nudging her elbow, then turning to the company he made the correction himself. "It's Major O'Tootle, of the Kildare militia, that I am, ladies and gentlemen," he observed, as he quietly helped himself to a seat.

He was subjected to a very severe scrutiny by the ladies; but the result was decidedly favorable to him. The only wonder to most of them was how Nancy Doolan had succeeded in making him a captive. Each one declared to herself that her charms were superior to those of the fortunate fair, and each one began to think that Miss Doolan must have performed some spell, which could be sanctioned by laws neither human nor divine.

Upon Miss Biddy McFadden the major made a decided impression—her susceptible heart yielded to a first love, and she resolved to supplant her rival or die in the attempt. She extended to him her sweetest smiles, she cast at him stolen glances; each one of which contained within itself the soul of love, and the sublimity of devotion.

"Faith, Morgan, but she's no beauty any how," observed the major in a whisper to his cousin, just after he had received one of these melting glances.

"But then she's rich, Felix," replied Mr. Botherby.

"And isn't Nancy rich too?" asked the former, in a tone of magnanimous contempt for Miss McFadden's wealth.

"Then she's got a good head of hair," suggested Mr. Botherby.

"It's red, Morgan, murthering red!" replied the major.

"But her teeth, Felix."

"Bother her teeth!" replied the major impatiently, and rather ungallantly, "they're not worth the breath that spakes of them when you look at Miss Nancy's."

His want of attention to her did not in the least alter Miss McFadden's determination with respect to himself; nor was she as jealous as might have been expected at the assiduities he paid to Miss Doolan; for she believed that she now possessed the secret which would at any time destroy that lady's influence over him. The only difficulty was how and when to disclose it? but for opportunity she trusted to time, which refuses nothing to the circumspect and wary: in the meanwhile she continued to mask her feelings, and was as friendly toward

Miss Nancy as she had ever been before; nay, if her demeanor was at all changed it was by an increase of warmth in her manner, and a more tender solicitude for her friend's welfare. To the major she gave an unlimited invitation to her house, and hoped that he would be frequently there without the least ceremony in the world. The major, however, who considered his market made, was in no hurry to avail himself of this kind invitation. He was satisfied to be admired at a distance by the enamored maiden, without exciting the jealousy of his selected fair one. Nor was Miss Nancy at all solicitous for him to be domesticated with her friend. Notwithstanding their *unbounded confidence in each other*, she could not avoid remembering that Miss McFadden was unmarried, and that the major was a marrying bachelor: she knew how sweet was the reflection of matrimony to a waning spinster, and knowing this, it certainly cannot be imputed to her as a fault if she used all her exertions to prevent a meeting between the parties, at least until she had herself secured the prize.

Miss Biddy McFadden, however, was no ordinary woman; she possessed extraordinary perseverance and indomitable resolution, and in some respects she resembled the mussulmen's prophet Mahomet; for, as the mountain would not come to her, she resolved to go to the mountain, or in other words, finding that Major O'Tootle studiously absented himself from her domicile, she resolved to frequent Miss Nancy Doolan's mansion in search of Major O'Tootle, and she trusted to her own ingenuity to obtain a *tete-a-tete* with him.

Already had she visited several times without having been able to effect her object; but one afternoon she called purposely when it was just about dusk, and found, as she had expected, the major doing the agreeable to his inamorata. She remained for a short time, until it had become quite dark, when she got up to leave.

"It's no use asking me to stay, my dear," said she to Miss Nancy, who by the way had no intention of the kind, "for it's more than I can do."

"Well, I won't then, Biddy," replied Miss Nancy affectionately, "for it's getting dark, and it'll be a long walk for you to go alone."

"Alone!" cried Miss McFadden, in feigned amazement at the idea. "Faith and I'm not so bad off as that neither. There's Major O'Tootle, and I'm sure he's not the man to see a lone woman go through the dark night like this, without a purtector."

This was a master stroke of policy, and it was executed with equal boldness and delicacy. The enemy was taken by surprise, and victory

was her own. Of course the gallant Major could not refuse; and Miss Nancy was so astonished that she could interpose no objection to his going.

"And you're not goin to leave me without coming in, major?" said Miss Biddy tenderly, when they had arrived at her door. "I've sich a pitcher of punch that will all be spoiled for the want of drinking, if you don't taste it."

The major was now attacked on one of his weakest points, and though he had intended returning as soon as Miss Biddy was safe at her mansion, yet the thought of a fine pitcher of punch spoiling was more than he could bear. His conscience could not endure the idea of his being the cause of such a sin. Reason and nature were both plainly against it; so he obeyed their dictates, though with feigned reluctance, saying that he would only save the pitcher by moistening his lips "with a dhrop."

Whether it proved that the punch was remarkably fine, or that the lady displayed charms before unobserved, it is impossible to say, but there is nothing more certain than that Major O'Tootle had already swallowed two tumblers of the smoking beverage, and was complacently sipping a third, without having once thought of the anxiety Miss Doolan must be feeling on his account.

"I hope," said Miss Biddy, when she thought her companion felt himself too comfortable to be moved by the remark, "I hope Nancy won't be angry with me for keeping you?"

"She's a jewel!" he enthusiastically remarked as he eyed the steaming pitcher beside him, without replying to the question.

"She's my purticular friend," observed Miss Biddy, "and though I say it, major, she looks as well yet as many a woman that's younger than herself."

"You may well say that," replied he; "nor is it old that she is any how."

"Why not very," said Miss Malone; "but if she's a day she's—but you'll never spake of it to her?"

"Blister my tongue if I do, that's all," he replied.

"Well, then, if she's a day, she's *fifty* this minit."

"That's impossible," cried the major; "fifty! murder! murder! Fifty, and such a set of teeth!"

"I'll tell you a bit of a secret, major," said Miss Biddy, as she changed her seat to one beside him; "but mind, it's a secret."

"I'm dumb entirely."

"Well, then, Nancy's teeth are all false!—not a stump has she got of her own!"

"Mother of Moses! is that thrue?"

"As true as that you're setting here this minit," she answered.

"And she's fifty?" asked the major.

"Not a day less, major. But it's not her age," said Miss McFadden, in a tone of sympathy, "that makes me most sorry for her: it's the thought that if her brother—a very old man—was to die to-morrow, Nancy would be alone in the world without anybody to support her."

"But sure she's rich herself?" asked the major, in an abstracted manner; for notwithstanding the punch, he began to discover that he had acted rather hastily.

"She's got twenty pounds a year that her poor brother gives her, and not a farthing more," replied Miss Biddy; "and when he dies she won't have even that. Upon my conscience I feel for Nancy, and it wouldn't be mentioning these things I'd be to hurt her; but you are a true friend, and I'm sure won't speak of them again."

"That's as true as the blessed light," said the major; "and it's yourself that's a darling entirely to say so. Sure you are a darling?"

It is a lamentable fact that the last few moments had produced a great revulsion in the major's feelings as well for Miss Biddy McFadden as for Miss Nancy Doolan. He felt that his cousin Botherby had put his attentions on the wrong track in directing them to the latter lady, and that she had herself secured them for the time by systematic deception. She fell of course considerably in his estimation, and in the same ratio that she fell so rose her rival, Miss McFadden. His conscience was not at all troubled with the possibility of blighting one lady's affections: it was a wife who possessed not only a good head of hair, but who had money also, that he wanted; and if there had been any delusion about the matter, he considered himself the deluded, and not the deluder; so he resolved on the instant to invest that floating capital—his affections—with the late friend of his late love.

"It's only a poor, lone creature that I am," replied Miss McFadden, to his interrogatory of whether or not she was a darling. "I'm only a very weak woman, major," said she.

The major certainly could discover no signs of weakness about the very masculine form at his side; and it is likely he thought so, though he did not think proper to intimate as much.

"You're a jewel!" said he, "and it's a burning shame for you to be a lone woman."

"It's not for want of offers, major, that I am," she hastily observed, and then she added, with an attempt at a downcast look; "but I'm a woman that's hard to please."

"And isn't it myself that could please you,

Biddy dear?" he asked, as he gave his eye a sentimental roll, and made an effort to encircle her waist.

It is unnecessary to detail further this interesting conversation, or even the reply made by the tender maiden to the last critical question; it will be quite sufficient to say Major O'Tootle had placed another idol in the niche of his affections, and that Miss McFadden was perfectly wild with delight at the novel reality of possessing, for the first time in her life, a lover.

But who would undertake to describe the feelings of Miss Nancy Doolan, on discovering that she had been outwitted? When she found that the enviable and envied Major O'Tootle, instead of returning again on the same evening to her house, gave it then and forever after the go by; and that he had attached himself exclusively to her more fortunate rival, feelings of the bitterest enmity were roused in her sensitive breast; but, as he was too great a prize to be lightly lost, she stifled them, for a time, in the hopes of luring him gently back to the heart from which he had strayed, or been seduced. But the major had learned too much to be caught a second time. Her fortune had vanished—her charms were fictitious—and she had no recommendation to his fancy except her hair alone, and that was insufficient.

"And what if she has purty hair?" said he to Mr. Botherby; "Biddy McFadden, the darling, has got a purty head of hair too, if it is red. Sure the color makes no difference!"

To crown the chagrin of this Miss Nancy Doolan, she had to submit to the feigned condolence of all her spinster acquaintances; and what was worse, to endure the looks of triumph and the inuendoes of pity of Miss Biddy McFadden.

It is true she was not absolutely compelled to put up with this; but she did nevertheless, for it did not suit her yet to break off their seeming friendship, as it was only at Miss McFadden's house she could now hope to meet with the faithless swain. But Miss McFadden, with her success, had grown cold; she only endured her visits now, and never requested their repetition. Still she suffered uncomplainingly, and treasured up her vengeance for a day of retribution. But a climax was suddenly put to all the indignities she had suffered, and the anticipated explosion at length took place.

CHAPTER V.

It was within a week of the time when Miss Biddy McFadden and Major O'Tootle were to be made happy together in the holy bonds of wedlock, and the former had resolved to bid

farewell to her virgin state by giving a party to all her friends, relatives, and acquaintances, who could sympathize in her approaching happiness. The guests had all met together; but among them was *not* Miss Nancy Doolan! She was the only one of all her friends to whom Miss Biddy McFadden had omitted to send an invitation; nor was the omission attributable to forgetfulness; but it was really and seriously an intentional slight—publicly known, and universally spoken of; and Miss Doolan felt it to be so, and all the gall of her nature rose in rebellion against it. It was adding insult to injury, and nothing short of pusillanimity could submit to it. She resolved that she would be present at the party—not to participate in the enjoyments of the occasion—but to mar the pleasure of the hostess, and to put a period to her triumph. She declared a war of extermination—she unsheathed the sword and threw the scabbard from her, and her battle cry was “Doolan, O’Tootle and victory, and confusion to Biddy McFadden!” The war, however, unlike more serious affairs, she purposed confining to words—a contest in which the verbal exposure of her successful rival, at her own house, and in the midst of her own company, was to ensure her defeat and overwhelm her with confusion. But Miss Doolan, with all her wrath, was something of a tactician: she had no idea of being foiled by a premature burst of violence; but she merely proposed to drop in accidentally—to pretend ignorance of the premeditation of the assemblage—to make herself friendly as usual, and on the first favorable moment to display her masked battery and put the enemy instantly to rout.

The company were assembled, and after a social dish of scandal, in which the name of Miss Nancy figured quite conspicuously, Miss McFadden proposed her favorite game of whist; stipulating only, as she did so, that Major O’Tootle should be her partner; “for,” said she, “it’s always in luck I am when the major sits opposite to me.”

Miss McFadden’s heart was open on this occasion, and she suggested that they should no longer play for the paltry sum of *sixpence* a game, but that the stakes should be doubled, and the game should be for a *shilling*. The tables were drawn out, the leaves were opened, and the guests were just about to take their seats and cut for partners, when, like Banquo’s ghost, who should make her appearance but the identical Nancy Doolan! The unwelcome—the neglected—the purposely omitted Nancy Doolan! All were shocked, except a few, who were petrified; but she was self-possession itself; and she looked round with a smile of ineffable good

nature upon this *impromptu* meeting of her friends.

“In truth, dear,” said she, affectionately addressing the hostess as she deliberately unbosomed and unshawled herself, “its not so much company as this I expected to meet here to-night. It’s quite a party, isn’t it? and its lucky, Biddy dear, I thought of coming round, because it saves you the trouble of sending after me you know.”

If it is possible to substantiate a metaphor, and look daggers, scissors, or darning needles, Miss McFadden succeeded in illustrating it: but Miss Doolan was impenetrable to any weapons of the kind. She did not—she could not observe them—she saw only kindness in every glance, and welcome in every word. What *is* to be done with an intruder who will not read an insult? who *will* mistake coldness for affection; and repulsive looks for warmest welcome? It is true that the object under such circumstances may be effected by plain language, and downright, palpable dismission; but then Miss McFadden was not prepared for this. She certainly wished to drop Nancy Doolan’s acquaintance, but she wished to do it without an open and violent rupture with her. There was no absolute necessity for a quarrel, and she preferred that friendship should dwindle into indifference, and indifference into forgetfulness, till they were no more than strangers to each other. These considerations passed rapidly through her mind, and she came as rapidly to the conclusion that the best thing she could do would be to say nothing offensive, and to let Miss Doolan have her own way: nay, she carried her complaisance so far as to ask that lady to take a hand at the same table with herself; and Miss Nancy, not the least daunted by the meaning looks around her, unhesitatingly accepted the invitation.

Mr. Botherby was her partner. Major O’Tootle sat opposite to Miss McFadden, and he certainly did look a little sheepish as he continually met the injured Nancy’s reproachful looks. The game, however, proceeded, and Mr. Botherby and his partner were the losers. A second game succeeded the first, and with the same result; and her bad fortune tended in no degree to restore Miss Nancy to a milder mood than the one she came in. Punch and cakes were introduced after the second game, and these sweets allayed for a moment the bitter feelings that were fast rising, and found vent in occasional sneers, which, like the lambent lightning, foretold the approaching storm. The punch circulated freely, as well among the ladies as among the gentlemen, and, as it went round, Miss Doolan, who sipped as much of the delightful beverage as any one else, became each moment

more jealous of the meaning look which she saw exchanged between the amorous couple, who sat at the same table with herself.

A third game commenced, but fortune still favored the lovers, and Miss Nancy was minus another shilling: still she persisted in playing, and the fourth game was in progress, when, as Miss McFadden, who had the deal, was about turning up the last card, she observed her slip a concealed ace in its place. She started up and exclaimed, "Biddy McFadden you've been cheating!"

"Is it cheating you mean?" said the lady addressed, drawing back her chair in indignant astonishment; but turning very red nevertheless.

"Sure, Miss Nancy, you don't mane—" observed Major O'Tootle, rising to meditate between the angry damsels; but Miss Doolan interrupted him.

"I do mean, *Mister O'Tootle*," said she, pronouncing the *mister* with malignant emphasis—"I do mean to say that Biddy McFadden has been cheating, and nothing less."

The argument between the two ladies now became fearfully exciting. At length Miss McFadden's forbearance became exhausted.

"And is it you, Nancy Doolan," said she, "that dares to talk to me in this way? Is it you, who come where you were never asked, and where you were never wanted? You that only my pity let remain here? Get out with you, Nancy Doolan! Get out, I say!"

"You needn't think that it's in your dirty house I want to stay," retorted Miss Doolan. "Sure an if I live it was only to expose you that I came—to expose you," she cried, raising her voice, "you tricky, deceiving old woman!"

At the word *old* Miss McFadden was near fainting, but she summoned up resolution and ordered the insulter to leave her house. Every one was of course interested in this scene—the ladies especially, who expressed their decided disapprobation of Miss Doolan's conduct. Major O'Tootle, however, endeavored to act as pacificator.

"Be asy, darling," said he soothingly, as he induced Miss McFadden to retire a few steps; "and you, Miss Nancy, its ashamed of yourself you ought to be for raising a row like this."

"Felix O'Tootle," replied Miss Doolan, giving now full vent to her long repressed rage, "it's not in the least ashamed that I am. Biddy McFadden's a false, deceiving woman. She's deceived me, and she's deceived you; and you'll be a miserable man to your dying day if you marry her."

"Deceived me?" asked the major.

"She's false entirely," continued Miss Doolan

—"false from her heels to her head; and her red hair is false too!"

At the announcement Miss McFadden shrieked and fainted, but she soon miraculously recovered, and crossing over to Miss Nancy, gave her a box of the ear that fairly staggered her. She was only staggered, however, and an instant sufficed to relieve her. Desperate from the blow, she rushed at her formidable antagonist, and stretching her hand out, she twined it in the hair—gave one jerk, and lo!—a wig came off in her hand, and, with the exception of a few straggling locks, Biddy McFadden stood before her guests completely bald! Miss Doolan gave one shout of triumph, then, with a nimbleness that would have done honor to a better cause, she darted for the door—gained it, and made her exit—the wig still dangling in her hand. Miss McFadden gave three screams and fell into strong hysterics.

As for Major O'Tootle, he for a moment stood like one transfixed, then walking up close to his fainting intended he raised both his hands, and exclaiming—"murther! murther!" he rushed from the house.

Miss McFadden recovered only to find the party broken up, and her lover departed; and her worst fears were realized when she found that he returned no more.

"It's bothered I am, Morgan," observed the major to his cousin, as the latter overtook him in the street, "and by the holy St. Patrick, who purtected me this time, I'll never think of matrimony again."

The next morning found him on the road to Kildare. He got back to his home as speedily as possible, and when there, was once more installed as sole lord of the Saw and Sausages. He adopted his shop boy, Phelim O'Flathery, and lived and died a bachelor.